

The Effects of Drama on Oral Fluency and Foreign Language Anxiety: An  
exploratory study

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## Abstract

Previous research has suggested that drama has positive effects on learners' oral communication and anxiety; however, it is unclear which dimensions, or to what extent, they are affected by drama. This research narrows the investigation by examining how a drama-based EFL program impacts three dimensions of oral communication: fluency, comprehensibility, and accentedness, and one anxiety factor - foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) -, over time. Speech samples were collected from EFL learners in a treatment and a control group, and subsequently assessed by untrained Canadian-born raters. FLSA levels were measured through questionnaires and interviews. Pre- and post-test analysis indicate that learners in the treatment group made significant gains in oral fluency while oral fluency among learners in the control group remained unchanged. There was a significant reduction in FLSA levels among learners in both groups. Finally, qualitative analyses suggest that drama activities, among others, enhance learners' comfort levels in speaking English.

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## Key Terms

*Approach*: a particular instructional practice with a set of assumptions related to the nature of language teaching and learning. It is a general strategy to address a set of beliefs. An approach is axiomatic (Anthony, 1963).

*CEFR*: acronym for Common European Framework Reference for Languages - an assessment tool for establishing standards for different stages of language learning. It also evaluates outcomes in an internationally comparable manner (CEFR, 2001).

*Drama*: drama in L2 learning is often categorized under two approaches: 1) a process-oriented approach which focuses on immediate and informal improvised activities, and encourages language learners to negotiate meaning by interacting in the target language in an essential and authentic way; 2) a product-oriented approach which includes informal scripted or rehearsed role-plays or play presentation, providing an opportunity for learners to practice a desired linguistic pattern (Kao and O'Neill, 1998). The two approaches are sometimes referred to as “drama” and “theatre” respectively. For ease of reading, I will use the term “drama” for both, since the precise impact of each type of approach is not under investigation in this study.

*English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*: a term that is traditionally applied to the use or study of English by non-native speakers in non-English speaking countries. In these countries, also known as part of the Expanding Circle, EFL is used for international communication and other purposes like the reading of scientific and technical materials. Countries in the Expanding Circle include Brazil, China, South Korea, Colombia, and others (Kachru, 1985).

*English as a Second Language (ESL)*: a term that is traditionally applied to the use or the study of English by non-native speakers in English-speaking countries. ESL is used in countries known as the Inner and Outer circles: the Inner Circle includes countries where English is the primary language of a substantial majority (Canada, USA, United Kingdom, and others); the Outer Circle includes countries where English is formally recognized or institutionalized for use, in particular social, educational, administrative and literary domains. Countries in the Outer Circle are primarily former colonies of the United Kingdom or the USA (e.g., Malaysia, Singapore, and India), where English is one of the two or more languages used by speakers who are usually bilingual or multilingual (Kachru, 1985).

*L1*: an acronym that refers to one's native or first language.

*L2*: an acronym that refers to any language learned after the first language. For the purposes of this study, no distinction is made between a second/foreign or subsequent languages.

*Props*: small objects used in a play or a scene.

*Sets*: pieces of furniture or the scenery used in a play to make the stage or room look like a particular place.

*T1*: an acronym for Time 1. It refers to the first stage of data collection in this study, prior to the treatment, or at the commencement of the EFL programs.

*T2*: an acronym for Time 2. It refers to the second stage of data collection in this study, after the treatment, or at the end of the EFL programs.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Oral fluency in English as a second or foreign language (L2) is desired by many language learners, particularly those who need to participate in professional, academic, and social activities with other English speakers (Rossiter, Derwing, Manimtim & Thomson, 2010). Comments such as “I want to speak English like a native speaker” or “I wish I could speak English fluently” are not uncommon among L2 learners, who often assume that speaking like a native speaker equals oral fluency. This high demand for English oral fluency has led language teachers to search for effective educational practices that promote the use of spoken English.

Before elaborating on approaches to fluency instruction, it is important to delimit what oral fluency means in this context. Whether one refers to subjective perceptions of fluency by listeners, or quantitative measures of speech, fluency is affected by both cognitive and affective dimensions (Oya, Manalo & Greenwood, 2004). Thus, any discussion of fluency development must include both of these variables.

In terms of the cognitive dimension of fluency, there is a lack of consensus among researchers in applied linguistics as to a single definition for oral fluency (see section *Defining L2 Oral Fluency* in Chapter Two). This is likely due to the numerous linguistic variables that impact the perception of oral fluency; thus, determining the exact cause of differences in listeners’ perceptions of fluency is often difficult. For example, speech rate, pauses, hesitations, fillers, and knowledge of lexical and grammatical structures, among other factors, are known to affect the perception of fluency (Wood, 2004; Rossiter, 2009).

In addition to cognitive mechanisms associated with oral fluency, affective variables such as anxiety can prevent learners from developing oral fluency. Considering that language

anxiety has been shown to negatively impact language learning (Arnold & Brown, 1999; Philips, 1999; MacIntyre, 1999; Oya et al., 2004; Dörnyei, 2005), understanding anxiety inducing situations in the classroom is also important. Learners may experience anxiety during language exams, when listening to audio clips, or when asked a question by a teacher. They may also be anxious when speaking the L2 with other learners, a result of fears about not being able to communicate effectively. Oral production is considered the most threatening aspect of language learning relative to other skills (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986), and anxiety may cause someone who is otherwise fluent to perform poorly. Because anxiety has the potential to both disrupt learning and interfere with performance, an approach to instructional practice that addresses both cognitive and affective domains is needed.

One approach that has the potential to address both dimensions is drama. In fact, drama has been used for decades as a strategy to enhance the L2 learning environment (Via, 1976; Maley & Duff, 1982; Smith, 1984; Whiteson, 1996; Kao & O'Neill, 1998; Dodson, 2002; Stinson & Freebody, 2006). The opportunity to explore a foreign language through drama-based programs heightens learners' willingness to participate in class, which leads to the development of better oral communication skills (Bournot-Trites, Belliveau, Spiliotopoulos, & Seror, 2007). Kao and O'Neill (1998) argue that drama-based practices improve grammatical and lexical accuracy, as well as oral fluency. In addition, drama frequently promotes a stress-free environment where learners feel at ease when participating in class. Thus, drama as an instructional approach to L2 learning offers an attractive tool to address the challenges described above. Through drama, learners may experience decreased levels of anxiety when speaking the L2, promoting the development of oral fluency levels.

This thesis reports on a study carried out in Brazil which investigates whether a particular English as a Foreign Language (EFL) drama-based program impacts oral fluency and foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA).

### **Background of EFL in Brazil**

In Brazil, English is the foreign language used to meet economic, educational, and social demands (Brasil, 1998), a reality in many other non-English speaking countries as well. Consequently, EFL instruction in grades 5-11 of most public and private elementary and high schools in Brazil is compulsory (Bastos, 1996). However, English instruction is not a curriculum priority in many cases, and the school system reality is there are inadequate English teaching materials, excessive numbers of students in class, infrequent classes per week, and a lack of English teachers' professional development (Brasil, 1998). In this context, English instruction is often limited to a brief activity where learners are granted merely a passing or failing grade. In addition, English teaching and learning activities are generally operationalized as grammar and lexical knowledge, and usually rather decontextualized. Most goals provided by the National Curriculum Parameters prioritize the development of writing and reading abilities in English over other skills, including oral communication. Unfortunately, these goals do not represent the learners' real needs and contradict economic, educational, and social demands, which require oral fluency in English (Brasil, 1996). Thus, it is not surprising that learners enrol in extra-curricular programs provided by private language institutes in search of more effective language instruction.

### **Background of the Problem**

Given the importance of oral fluency to Brazilian and other English learners, explicit instruction with a focus on the development of oral communication is needed. However, oral

fluency instruction in an L2 has been historically neglected, possibly due to the difficulty in addressing the underlying factors involved in fluency development (Wood, 2004; Rossiter et al., 2010). Although drama-based approaches to language instruction have been used in L2 learning as a complementary strategy to provide extensive oral communication practice, only a limited body of research has focused on how drama, in particular, impacts oral communication (Stern, 1980; Kao, 1994; Bang, 2003; Coleman, 2005; Stinson & Freebody, 2006). Even fewer studies have investigated how drama affects anxiety (Kao, 1994; Coleman, 2005; Piazzoli, 2011). In addition, previous research has not examined whether particular dimensions of oral communication and anxiety, such as oral fluency and foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) respectively, are affected by drama. Therefore, evidence related to the efficacy of drama-based approaches in promoting oral fluency and in lowering anxiety levels is limited.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Previous studies examining whether drama impacts L2 oral communication and anxiety acknowledge several key limitations: a lack of control groups against which to compare results; learners' typically short-term exposure to drama; and drama instruction delivered by the researcher, or a theatre or drama professional, rather than by a language teacher (Stinson & Winston, 2011). Furthermore, these studies have often failed to provide details about methodology, making it difficult to replicate or confirm the results reported. Formal investigation including more reliable methodological instruments and improved variable controls has been suggested for future studies (Stern, 1980; Kao, 1994; Kao & O'Neill, 1998; Stinson & Winston, 2011).

### **Purpose and Significance of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to extend previous investigations of the effect of drama-based instruction in L2 learning. This study examines whether learners improve along three dimensions of oral communication: fluency, comprehensibility and accentedness as a result of drama-based instruction. In addition, it analyzes whether Brazilian learners are perceived as more or less fluent in relation to the particular speaking task being performed. Finally, this study investigates whether drama-based instruction positively impacts Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA), and explores whether there are specific moments in the classroom that contribute to heightened anxiety levels when speaking in the L2.

Comprehensive details about the methodology used in this study are included in a later section. As an exploratory study, this research can open new directions for future research into the relationship and connections between drama-based instruction and language learning, oral fluency and FLSA.

### **Research Questions**

The research design of this study facilitates a focus on four questions:

1. Do learners in a drama-based EFL program experience more gains in oral fluency compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program? And do any resulting gains depend on the type of speaking task?
2. Do learners in a drama-based EFL program experience lower levels of foreign language speaking anxiety compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program?
3. How are foreign language speaking anxiety and oral fluency interrelated?



4. What are learners' beliefs about moments in the EFL classroom that either reduced or increased anxiety levels during speaking tasks?

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews literature in three major areas: drama-based programs and their impact on oral fluency and anxiety, L2 oral fluency and its variation across task types, and foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) and its impact on oral communication. In what follows, an explanation of the term drama and the distinction between process- and product-oriented approaches to drama are outlined, while an overview of research into drama practices in L2 learning is explored. Next, L2 oral fluency is defined and studies investigating how types of speaking tasks affect oral fluency are presented. Finally, anxiety in language learning is defined and studies examining L2 speaking anxiety are discussed to set the context for this research. The studies summarized in this chapter were chosen either for their novelty, reliability, or as justification for the need to address research questions not yet explored.

### **Defining Process- and Product-oriented Drama Approaches in L2 Learning**

Drama was used in L2 learning contexts long before it piqued the interest of researchers and, in this sense, not therefore seen as a new or innovative concept. Drama curricula in L2 learning have been wide-ranging and educators have experimented with different approaches. The implementation of such approaches has provided learners with opportunities to practice oral communication, and has been argued as an enhancement of the learning environment (Via, 1976; Maley & Duff, 1982; Smith, 1984; Whiteson, 1996; Kao & O'Neill, 1998; Dodson, 2002; Miccoli, 2003; Giaitzis, 2007). At the same time, drama practices in L2 learning have not been implemented in a systematic way, and a distinction between drama and theatre has rarely been addressed by researchers. Rather, drama and theatre have traditionally been used interchangeably.

Differentiating drama from theatre is important to understand how each impacts the language learning environment in distinct, but complementary ways. Often called a process-oriented approach, drama in the L2 classroom emphasizes the experience of a dramatic task (Kao & O'Neill, 1998; Moody, 2002). Drama involves group-oriented activities, negotiation, natural and spontaneous use of the target language, as well as “fluency in communication” (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 6). In addition, drama includes preparation for an improvised, in process presentation in class (Moody, 2002, p.136). The goal of drama as a process-oriented approach is to “increase the fluency and confidence of the students’ speech, to create authentic communication contexts, and to generate new classroom relationships” (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 15). Typical process-oriented drama activities include improvisational scenarios and role-plays, where learners experiment with language, rather than recite from a script.

In contrast to the process-oriented approach of drama, theatre is typically product-oriented. The use of scripted language in theatre emphasizes the final staged product performed by learners, which is often viewed as the goal of the language learning experience (Moody, 2002). Scripted play presentations or role-plays are found in many L2 course textbooks: learners take pre-established roles and use language limited to a particular script (Kao & O'Neill, 1998). By using scripted language, learners produce a set of linguistic structures and utter previously written and rehearsed lines.

Process- and product-oriented drama approaches benefit L2 learning in different ways. The benefits of process-oriented drama include an opportunity for learners to use prior knowledge of linguistic items in a creative manner, while also raising awareness of the appropriate use of sociolinguistic features in the context of real life conversation. Prominent

process-oriented drama advocates in L2 learning, Kao and O'Neill (1998) suggest that one of the primary benefits of process-oriented drama in L2 learning is the emphasis on development of oral fluency because learners are encouraged to use the target language in a functionally meaningful way. On the other hand, the benefits of product-oriented drama include opportunities for learners to develop more expressive reading skills, the practice of specific linguistic terms, and development of functional understanding of language within controlled contexts (Crinson & Westgate, 1986). Through product-oriented drama practices, learners are also given the opportunity to develop accuracy (Brauer, 2002). Both approaches foster a learning environment conducive to less anxious oral use of the L2 (Dodson, 2002). Considering that process-oriented drama has the potential to promote oral fluency, and product-oriented theatre focuses on accuracy, the two approaches are complementary (Brauer, 2002).

Teachers may feel highly motivated to apply drama in their L2 classes, but doing so poses challenges. The effectiveness of product-oriented theatre with an emphasis on performance has been questioned by Kao and O'Neill (1998). Repeated practice of particular structures, or reciting and rehearsing lines that have been previously scripted, may result in learners producing language that seems accurate, but which holds little or no meaning for the learner. Furthermore, activities that require scripted language may be useful among learners at beginning levels, since their knowledge of the target language is limited, but later may restrict learners from progressing to higher proficiency levels in the language (Kao & O'Neill, 1998).

The effectiveness of process-oriented drama, on the other hand, is also debated. For example: are learners with limited linguistic knowledge able to communicate effectively?

Will learners feel frustrated due to a lack of linguistic knowledge? Will learners feel anxious because they are expected to speak in the L2? And how can process-oriented drama be effective in a multilingual class if discussions are often performed in the learners' first language (L1)? Finally, both approaches to drama have inherent limitations as outlined by Culham (2003): some learners are comfortable with an interactive approach, while others are not; learners may not initially be tolerant of this approach as they consider drama activities childish or foolish; many learners come from educational backgrounds with little emphasis on creative or imaginative processes; and learners often feel more comfortable with teacher-driven classes. Thus, some learners may be initially reluctant to engage in either drama or theatre activities.

A key consideration prior to implementing drama in L2 learning involves a careful analysis of how and when to use one drama approach or the other. One strategy suggested by Kao and O'Neill (1998) is initially introducing closed and controlled drama activities followed by a gradual shift toward semi-controlled practices to promote more open communication. Moody (2002) argues that process- and product-oriented approaches can be integrated: learners are encouraged to share ideas about a theme (process) and move towards the development of a dramatic realization (product). Maley and Duff (1982) point out that the only way for teachers and educators to understand the potential of dramatic activities in L2 learning is to implement both approaches. As Gallagher and Booth (2003) propose, "theatre and drama must preserve their urgency and become a place where self-creation, imagination and dialogue are still possible; where the engagement of people in productive conflict and thought can be generated" (p.113).

In keeping with the tradition of drama use in L2 classrooms, the current study considers both process- and product-oriented approaches, though treated simply as drama. As noted earlier, there will be no attempt to test the efficacy or impact of one over the other, as might be done in other disciplines.

The following three sections will review previous data-driven research studies investigating drama-based curricula in L2 learning, particularly focusing on effects on oral communication and anxiety.

### **A General Overview of Research into Drama in L2 Learning**

Although numerous researchers have examined the use of drama-based programs in L2 learning (Stern, 1980; Kao, 1994; Bang, 2003; Culham, 2003; Miccoli, 2003; Coleman, 2005; Stinson & Freebody, 2006; Bournot-Trites et al., 2007; Giaitzis, 2007; Baraldi, 2009), the findings tend to be inconclusive. This past research has not clearly defined a coherent drama approach in L2 learning, with specific sets of drama techniques or investigative procedures. In addition, Stinson and Winston (2011) state that previous research falls short by not providing a systematic research methodology, which leads to difficulties verifying results. While a few studies have indicated that drama has positive effects on L2 learners' oral communication (Stern, 1980; Kao, 1994; Bang, 2003; Coleman, 2005; Stinson & Freebody, 2006) and anxiety (Kao, 1994; Coleman, 2005; Piazzoli, 2011), these studies have not narrowed the scope to investigate the effects of drama on specific dimensions such as oral fluency and/or FLSA. Therefore, although the studies reviewed in the next two sections are largely exploratory, they report findings of general aspects of oral communication and anxiety in L2 learning which provide a useful foundation for the current study.

### **Research into the Effects of Drama on L2 Oral Communication**

Using drama as a tool for achieving communicative goals among L2 learners has been explored since the 1980s when Stern (1980), a pioneer in research investigating the effects of drama in L2 learning, examined the use of drama activities in advanced ESL classrooms. The impact of drama on learners' psychological dimensions, such as self-esteem, motivation, spontaneity, empathy, and sensitivity to rejection, were investigated. The drama activities involved scenes from plays (product-oriented), and improvisations (process-oriented). Learners performed short scenes where they were required to read lines with focus on the meaning and intention of the message, rather than performance based on rote memorization. Both scenes and improvisations were video-recorded and learners viewed and discussed their performance. Twenty-four learners participated in the study. Two questionnaires were designed to elicit both learners' and teachers' subjective responses to the factors under investigation. The questionnaire given to participants included open- and closed-ended questions related to the perceived usefulness of their participation in the scenes, as well as general feelings about themselves during and after the performance. Stern's (1980) findings suggest that drama positively impacts psychological factors related to learning, which lead to facilitation of oral communication. Further, formal research to test the assumption that drama activities in ESL/EFL classrooms improve oral communication skills was recommended.

Kao (1994) produced another study suggesting that drama enhances learners' oral communication. This was a teacher-as-researcher case study with 23 first-year EFL learners in a Taiwanese university, carried out during one semester. Participants had basic English skills and were a somewhat homogeneous group in terms of cultural background and prior L2 learning experience. In the first four weeks of the program, the researcher, who also taught

the program, introduced process-oriented drama activities such as storytelling, role-playing, improvisation, and pair and group work. More complex and structured activities on a variety of themes were integrated after learners were more familiar with the researcher's instructional approach. Types of data collection included: 1) a questionnaire on the first day of class to gather information about learners' experience with English, scores on the English entrance examination, the perceived instructional emphasis of EFL they received in high school, and their self-evaluation scores of English proficiency; 2) a pre- and a post-test of oral proficiency which involved the description of two cartoon strips – one for the pre-test and one for the post-test – to a listener who was unfamiliar with the storyline and was required to identify the sequence of scenes (details about the identity of the listener were not disclosed); and 3) audio and video recordings that occurred in every class from the fifth to the thirteenth week. Both pre- and post-tests were used by the researcher and another experienced rater to assess the clarity of the account and how many communication units the account contained. The results of Kao's (1994) study suggest that the drama activities provided learners with more opportunities to use the target language in class. Pre- and post-test results suggest that learners made significant improvements in speech clarity and quantity, although measures of clarity and quantity were not systematically described by the researcher. One of the researcher- identified limitations was that learners' gains in oral performance could not be clearly attributed to their exposure to drama because there was no control group for comparison.

Nearly a decade after the publication of Kao's study, Bang (2003) continued to investigate how oral communicative abilities improve through drama. He sought to analyze college students' reactions to drama-oriented activities which consisted of open-ended



scenarios and process-oriented drama, in which students were given time to prepare and rehearse the situation, followed by a performance. Learners were asked to create a written record of the language introduced during script creation. The latter activity is more closely related to product-oriented drama, which focuses on accuracy rather than fluency. Data were collected through class observation and open and semi-structured interviews with twenty learners enrolled in two English Conversation classes, a beginner and an intermediate level class. The participants in this study were 20 learners (8 female and 12 male), ranging in age from 19 to 26 years, all from a university in Korea. Although there was no control group for comparison, the researcher applied a pre- and post-test of oral proficiency. The results of Bang's (2003) study suggest that learners' communicative competence improved during the period of time investigated. However, due to the lack of a systematic research methodology, it is unclear whether oral communication improvement resulted from the drama instruction. It is possible that learners experienced improvements in communication because of variables other than the drama component of the course. They may also have simply gained improved communicative skills due to their exposure to the L2.

The impact of a drama-based approach on oral communication was also investigated by Coleman (2005), who carried out research with sixty Korean adolescents attending a 5-day EFL summer camp in Korea. Ranging from 12 to 14 years of age, participants were divided into three classes of 20 students. Learners in each class received EFL drama-instruction that included both process- and product-oriented approaches: voice training, improvisation, role-play, stage movement, play rehearsals and a play presentation in which learners in each section participated in a 15-minute performance before an audience. All classes were taught by the same instructor, a 24-year-old male American with a Bachelor's degree in theatre arts

and four years experience as an actor and director. This quantitative study used a quasi-experimental design in which learners were given a pre-test at the outset and a post-test at the end of the program. The pre-and post-tests utilized a 5-point Likert scale (1 = needs improvement to 5 = excellent). The tests included the use of videotaped, performance-based assessment of selected verbal and nonverbal communication behaviours. Verbal communication behaviours comprised: 1) identification of the purpose for speaking; 2) use of correct vocabulary; 3) use of correct syntax; 4) use of correct pronunciation; and 5) appropriate modulation of voice. For nonverbal communication behaviours, topics included: 1) management of anxiety and apprehension; 2) appropriate use of eye contact; 3) appropriate use of facial expression; 4) appropriate use of gesture and maintenance of good posture. The pre- and post-tests of both verbal and nonverbal behaviours were assessed by three trained native speaker raters, all teachers at a suburban Los Angeles County middle school. Both tests included an individual videotaped interview with ten personal questions, including *Where do you live?* and *Why do you want to learn English?* Two additional instruments were administered to all the participants on the fifth and final day of classes. First, participants completed a questionnaire on which they rated ten statements on a six-point Likert scale (1 = not at all to 6 = completely). The statements included participants' perceptions of verbal and non-verbal communication during the program and consisted of items such as *Feel more relaxed speaking English* and *Communicate successfully in English*. Secondly, individual interviews were conducted by a Korean staff member fluent in English. The interviewer asked ten questions concerning participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of drama curriculum items such as improvisation, play presentation, and play rehearsal. The responses were quantitatively summarized by the interviewer on a three-point Likert scale

(from 1 = not helpful to 3 = very helpful). Results from the pre- and post-test ratings indicate that participants made significant gains in all ten items. Learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of drama components indicate that both *play presentation* ( $M = 2.82$ ) and *play rehearsal* ( $M = 2.82$ ) were considered equally helpful.

Coleman's (2005) study offers positive insights into the use of a drama curriculum in EFL; play presentation and play rehearsal, considered product-oriented drama activities, were ranked as the most effective practices in the course. However, the study had some limitations such as a lack of explanation of how "correctness" of vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation were assessed. In addition, there was no control group for comparison; therefore, no conclusion can be drawn as to the effectiveness of the drama-based approach. Any improvement may be the result of EFL instruction. A factor that may limit the generalizability of results concerns the training of the instructor of the EFL classes; he had professional training and experience in theatre, which is not the case among most qualified EFL teachers. Furthermore, since the intervention was applied over a five-day period, the author concedes there was not enough time to deliver effective instruction on verbal and non-verbal English communication skills. Finally, Coleman (2005) acknowledges that she found no conclusive evidence that the drama-based curriculum used in the study resulted in higher achievement in oral communication.

More recently, Stinson and Freebody (2006) also studied oral communication improvements through drama. A research project was carried out with secondary learners in four Normal Technical high schools in Singapore. The aim was to examine the impact of process-oriented drama in the English language classroom in improving the oral competency of L2 learners. The main research question was "What impact (if any) will a short-term series

of drama lessons have on the communication skills of the participating students?” (p.28).

Researchers improved upon previous methodologies traditionally present in studies on drama in L2 learning by including both a treatment and a control group. One class in each school was chosen to participate in the drama intervention, while two of the schools allowed access to other learners at the same level of schooling who did not participate in the drama project (the comparison group). In the treatment group, facilitators implemented four process-drama activities over ten lessons, each lasting an hour. These activities entailed all learners participating in four different situations where they played an assigned role and used English to solve problems; they were expected to use their prior knowledge of the L2 to create and respond to dialogues in the provided contexts. In the control group, teachers used the regular teaching curriculum, which included an oral communication component, but no drama specific intervention. One hundred and forty students (70 from the treatment group and 70 from the control group) were randomly selected to take a pre- and post-speaking test, which followed the requirements and criteria of the Ministry of Education examination. Learners received marks of up to three points in each of the following categories: speaking clearly, using appropriate vocabulary and structures, offering ideas and opinions relevant to the topic, interacting effectively, and needing little or no prompting by the examiner. Learners' oral performance was tested through picture stimuli, descriptive and interpretive questions, personal experiences, and open-ended topics. The tests lasted approximately five minutes. Participants in both groups scored similarly in the pre-test,  $M = 6.62$  for the treatment group and  $M = 6.13$  for the control group, indicating a similar language level at the start of the program. After the program, the post-test results showed a statistically significant improvement among participants in the treatment group,  $M = 7.97$ , compared to the control

group,  $M = 5.63$ , suggesting that the drama intervention improved learners' oral communication skills. This study, however, has one potential limitation. The intervention occurred over a short period of time (ten lessons) and the improvement in oral communication skills might, therefore, have been of limited duration. In order to validate these findings, Stinson and Freebody (2006) encourage researchers to carry out further studies, including both comprehensive and longer-term projects.

To conclude, the studies reviewed in this section suggest that drama-based programs in L2 learning can improve learners' oral communication in terms of speech clarity, lexical and grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation: however, it remains unclear whether oral fluency, another dimension of oral communication, is enhanced by drama. The aim of the current study is to provide a systematic examination of the effects of a drama-based program on oral fluency, with the secondary aim of investigating whether drama positively impacts anxiety levels related to speaking.

### **Research into the Effects of Drama on Anxiety**

Research investigating whether drama-based curricula positively affect learner anxiety is relatively recent. Kao (1994) pioneered the investigation of the effect of process-oriented drama on anxiety in L2 oral skills. Her research investigated 23 Taiwanese university students who were learning English. Qualitative analyses of the teacher's perceptions gathered from video, audio, and written class records suggest a positive impact on the learning experience: drama provided learners with more opportunities to speak the L2, resulting in learners applying communicative strategies; interaction between teacher and students, as well as between students increased; learners gained more confidence in speaking English because the drama-based activities encouraged them to convey their thoughts in a

natural way. The learners who felt “afraid” of speaking in the target language prior to the commencement of the course became more confident after participating in the drama program. However, other learners with very low self-esteem and lower language proficiency seemed to have benefited less from the course.

Another example of how drama can affect anxiety has been provided by Coleman (2005) in her research with adolescent Korean English learners. On the last day of classes, two types of data collection were presented to learners: a ten-item questionnaire on a six-point Likert scale (1 = not at all to 6 = completely); and an interview with ten questions about learners’ perceptions of the drama-based curriculum on a three-point Likert scale (from 1 = not helpful to 3 = very helpful). Results from both questionnaires suggest that participants ranked the statement “*feel more relaxed speaking English*” the highest ( $M = 5.07$ ). In addition, results from the interview revealed that learners ranked the statement “*manages anxiety and apprehension*” the lowest ( $M = 2.12$ ). However, Coleman concedes that factors other than the drama instruction might have influenced results. For example, it could be that learners’ age affected the results.

More recently, Piazzoli (2011) examined the impact of process-oriented drama on L2 learners’ anxiety levels. Six process-oriented drama workshops were designed and delivered to twelve advanced learners of Italian enrolled in a third-year course at a university in Brisbane, Australia. The workshops included a reflection on Italian socio-cultural issues through discussion, improvisations, and the presentation of formulaic language structures. At the end of each workshop, a forum was provided for learners to reflect on intercultural issues. Qualitative data were gathered through video-recording of the workshops, the researchers’ reflective journal, transcriptions of the forums, semi-structured interviews, three concept

mapping diagrams, and group sessions using video-stimulated recall, in which learners watched segments from each process drama and were asked to comment. Results of the data analysis suggest that learners who experienced language anxiety benefited from the process drama workshops. Through the role they played, the learners gained more confidence in speaking the L2. In addition, the transcriptions from the group forums and interviews suggest that the learners did not feel “worried”, “scared”, or “threatened”, and were not “judged” while speaking the L2 during the process drama workshops. The author suggests that process drama lowers language anxiety for learners who are often reluctant to speak the L2, and builds self-confidence. Although the results of this study are consistent with Kao’s (1994) and Coleman’s (2005) findings, it has several limitations typical of research in drama in L2 learning: a small number of participants, none of whom belonged to a control group; a short period of process-oriented drama intervention; and the researcher delivered the drama workshops.

The studies reviewed above demonstrate consistently positive impacts of drama-based instruction on anxiety levels in learners. However, because of methodological limitations, it is still unknown which dimensions of anxiety are most affected by drama. Specifically, it remains uncertain whether FLSA is positively affected by the implementation of a drama-based approach. The current research aims at narrowing previous investigations by focusing specifically on FLSA. The next two sections provide an overview of oral fluency and FLSA, the main dimensions under investigation in the present research.

### **Defining L2 Oral Fluency**

Considering that oral fluency is “a vital aspect of successful communication” in an L2 (Derwing, Munro, & Thomson, 2007, p. 2), it is important to investigate strategies that help

learners' achieve fluent speech. Learners are often under great pressure when required to perform orally in high-stakes tests such as, the TOEFL, IELTS and Cambridge examinations, which are aimed at securing acceptance in academic programs and/or job offers. Furthermore, it is frequently assumed that, if learners are given sufficient exposure to the L2, fluency will be achieved: however, it is not uncommon for learners to receive years of instruction in a language and continue to have difficulty developing oral fluency. Factors such as filled pauses (e.g., "um"), excessive silent pausing, pausing in inappropriate places, false starts (rephrasing parts of speech), and a slow speaking rate can affect a listener's perception of fluency (Derwing & Munro, 2001). Studying pedagogical practices in L2 learning that may enable L2 learners to develop oral fluency is significant.

Oral fluency has a range of definitions often related to how fast or naturally someone speaks a language. In an L1, Fillmore (1979) suggests four main features that make a fluent speaker:

- 1) the ability to fill time with talk (e.g., someone who is a fast talker);
- 2) the quality of speech (e.g., fluent speech is coherent, complex and dense);
- 3) knowledge of what to say in diverse contexts;
- 4) control over the aesthetic function of language (e.g., creativity, imagination, joking, punning, and metaphor use).

In the L2 literature, many researchers have pointed out difficulty in defining the term "fluency" (Schmidt, 1992; Chambers, 1997; Guillot, 1999; Wood, 2001; Rossiter, 2009; Rossiter et al., 2010). Fluency has been referred to as "the capacity to use language in real time, to emphasize meanings, possibly drawing on more lexicalized systems" (Skehan &



Foster, 1999, p. 96). Schmidt (1992) describes fluency as the speaker's automatic procedural skill, which emphasizes the "performance aspect of actually doing something in real time rather than the knowledge of how something is to be done" (p.359). Koponen and Riggensbach (2000) have suggested that fluency is related to how smoothly a speaker delivers the message in terms of flow, continuity and automaticity. Gatbonton and Segalowitz (2005) use the term "automatic fluency" to mean "the smooth and rapid production of utterances, without undue hesitations and pauses, that results from constant use and repetitive practice" (p.326). Fluency has also been defined as the delivery of speech with "speed and ease without holding up the flow of the talk" (Nation & Newton, 2009, p.151). Rossiter (2009) has identified temporal (pausing, self-repetition, speech rate, and fillers) and non-temporal measures (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary) as dimensions affecting fluency. Furthermore, Fluency has been shown to stem from neurobiological constraints (Dewaele, 2002); speech rate (Lennon, 1990; Freed, 1995; Kormos & Denes, 2004), filled pauses or hesitations (Freed, 1995; Lennon, 1990) and mean length of run (Lennon, 1990; Riggensbach, 1991).

Although there are various definitions of L2 fluency, researchers agree on one feature of fluency suggested by Fillmore (1979): fluency involves time filled with words. For the purposes of this study, fluency does not include grammatical accuracy, lexical items or complexity. Instead, it uses the framework developed by Schmidt (1992) and Koponen and Riggensbach (2000) which positions fluency in relationship to the speaker's automatic and continuous procedural skill and looks at how fluency is perceived by listeners. The inclusion of non-temporal ratings of comprehensibility and accentedness introduces further dimensions of oral production to this study.

Due to the numerous factors involved in oral fluency, it is unsurprising that efficient L2 fluency instruction is often neglected (Rossiter et al., 2010). Providing effective oral fluency instruction can be a challenge, and practice on L2 oral skills includes learners performing several types of oral tasks in the classroom. However, many teachers are unaware of how fluency may be impacted, resulting in learners being perceived as fluent in some tasks but dysfluent in others. The following section reviews studies on how fluency varies in relation to the type of speaking task and offers a better understanding of this phenomenon.

### **Research into the Effects of Task Types on Oral Fluency**

In the quest to examine fluency levels among language learners, researchers have studied factors that may influence L2 speech. For example, previous research has investigated the effects that preplanning has on oral fluency (Foster & Skehan, 1996; Wigglesworth, 1997; Mehnert, 1998; Ortega, 1999), how time spent abroad affects fluency (Lennon, 1990; Freed, 1995; Towell, Hawkins & Bazergui, 1996), whether speakers' willingness to communicate impacts fluency (Derwing et al., 2007), and how learners are perceived as more or less fluent in relation to the type of speaking task performed (Ejzenberg, 1992; Skehan & Foster, 1999; Derwing, Rossiter, Munro & Thomson, 2004).

Because the perception of oral fluency can vary depending on the type of speaking task performed, it is important to further investigate whether particular tasks enable or prevent learners from being perceived as fluent speakers. For example, it has been suggested that properties of a given task affect learners' oral fluency. Skehan and Foster (1999) investigated the effects of task structure and processing load on a narrative story-retelling task. The two tasks chosen involved a relatively structured narrative (a short video of Mr. Bean in a restaurant, with a predictable sequence of actions) and a relatively unstructured

narrative (a video of Mr. Bean attempting to play golf, with an unpredictable series of events). Four conditions were used to influence the processing load of the task: watch and tell the story simultaneously; storyline was given, then watch and tell simultaneously; watch first, watch it a second time and tell the story simultaneously; and watch first and then tell the story. The authors predicted the last condition to be the least cognitively demanding since there was no time pressure involved. Speech samples from 47 participants from different L1 backgrounds were analyzed to measure complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Fluency was measured by counting the number of repetitions, false starts, reformulations, and replacements (lexical items that are substituted for others). Although complexity and accuracy differed little across tasks, results suggest that fluency scores were higher on the structured task, in which learners first watched the episode and then told the story. One limitation of this study is that comparison was made only between the fourth condition (watch first and then tell the story) and the other three. In other words, the results do not show the effects of pair-wise comparisons, that is, each condition compared with the other three. The differences between the first, second and third condition were not investigated.

In another study, Foster and Skehan (1996) examined three tasks commonly found in L2 textbooks: a personal information exchange, a picture narrative, and a collaborative decision-making task. Three different conditions for each task (unplanned, planned but without detail, detailed planning) were implemented to study the variables of fluency, complexity, and accuracy. The findings suggest measurements of fluency related to variables on these tasks differed, depending both on the nature of the task itself and on the availability of planning time. The personal information exchange task seemed to result in more fluent speech (fewer pauses and silence) when compared to the narrative and decision-making tasks

in all situations. The researchers suggest that the personal exchange task demands the least cognitive effort, allowing better fluency levels. Planning was a major factor that contributed to fluency and also affected complexity. Accuracy, however, was found strongest in the productions of the less detailed planners. Ejzenberg (2000) indicates that second language learners are viewed as having more fluent speech when interacting with a native speaker, as their production is supported by the interlocutor's speech. On the other hand, Ejzenberg suggests that tasks in which L2 learners produce monologues require a higher cognitive load, resulting in speech being perceived as less fluent. In this way, task characteristics seem to have an effect on listeners' perception of the learners' fluency.

Another later study also suggests that oral fluency levels vary across task types. Derwing et al. (2004) evaluated twenty speech samples from beginner Mandarin learners of English as a second language on three different tasks: picture description (an eight-frame picture narrative in which a man and a woman carrying identical suitcases bump into each other and mistakenly exchange suitcases), monologue (describing the happiest moment of their lives), and dialogue tasks (participants asked about the researcher's happiest moment). Fluency was analyzed using standard measures focused on temporal factors, such as filled and unfilled pauses, false starts, and self-repetition. The speech samples were rated by twenty-eight untrained judges who received three nine-point scales: fluency (1 = extremely fluent to 9 = extremely dysfluent), comprehensibility (1 = extremely easy to understand to 9 = impossible to understand), and accentedness (1 = no accent to 9 = very strong accent). Results suggest that L2 speakers' performance on the monologue and dialogue tasks were significantly better than on the narratives. In addition, fluency was more strongly related to comprehensibility than to accentedness. In other words, a strong foreign accent did not

always influence perceptions of fluency or comprehensibility. Strongly accented speech can still be perceived as both comprehensible and fluent.

Other than task types, willingness to communicate in an L2 also affects oral fluency. Derwing et al. (2007) compared the oral fluency in English of adult Mandarin speakers and speakers of Slavic languages (Russian and Ukrainian). Speech samples were collected from thirty-two speakers (16 per group) enrolled in introductory ESL classes (both groups have reported to have a proficiency level of Canadian Language Benchmarks 1) over a two-year period, together with questions related to L2 exposure outside the classroom. Interviews at the last data collection investigated L2 learners' daily opportunities to communicate in English. Ninety-six 20-second speech samples (from the 32 speakers collected at three different times) were randomized, and judged for fluency and comprehensibility by 33 untrained native speakers of English. Two seven-point scales were used: fluency (1 = extremely fluent to 7 = extremely dysfluent) and comprehensibility (1 = very easy to understand to 7 = extremely difficult to understand). Participants' exposure to English outside the classroom was also examined. Results indicate that Slavic language speakers showed a small, but significant improvement in both fluency and comprehensibility, whereas Mandarin speakers' oral performance exhibited no change over two years. The authors suggest that these differences may be partially attributed to learners' willingness to communicate in English outside the classroom. Although both groups reported little exposure, the Slavic group was likely to take a more assertive attitude towards communicating in the L2 than the Mandarin group. Another contributing factor for these results may be a lack of oral fluency instruction since participants reported that their instruction mainly focused on reading, writing, and grammar skills, rather than speaking and listening. Cultural background, which

was not particularly examined in this study, could be another contributing factor for improved fluency levels. Derwing et al. (2007) report lack of confidence to speak the L2 may be tied to culture: L2 speakers of European origin, such as the Slavic group, may be viewed as more similar to people from Western cultures, such as Canada. In addition, Mandarin speakers, who might feel discrimination, could fail to engage in conversations with native speakers of English as a result. Thus, the Slavic group likely had more gains in oral fluency than the Mandarin group due to cultural background. Further investigation on speakers of the same language background may provide different results. It is possible that the investigation on different educational practices provides other results. It is important to note that, contrary to Derwing et al. (2007), the current study examines an EFL context where discrimination or cultural backgrounds do not introduce a confounding variable, since all the speakers were born in Brazil, share the same L1, and live in their country of origin rather than abroad.

The studies described above provide an understanding of how task types and other factors like willingness to communicate in an L2 can affect oral fluency: however, no studies to date have compared oral fluency levels of L2 speakers from two distinct classroom curricula, for example a drama and a non-drama based language program. Also, while oral productions of speakers of various linguistic backgrounds have been examined, there remains a need to expand this investigation by studying fluency productions of speakers of other languages.

The current study follows Derwing et al.'s (2004) methodology for examining oral fluency by considering variation of fluency across tasks, and uses untrained native English speaker raters to assess speech samples for fluency, comprehensibility, and accentedness. In addition, because willingness to communicate may impact fluency, other psychological

factors may also affect fluency. For this reason, the current study also seeks to investigate whether FLSA affects fluency levels. Because the relationship between oral fluency and FLSA has not yet been investigated, the following section will review the concept of anxiety in L2 learning to set the stage for the current research.

### **Defining Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

Research in L2 learning has consistently shown that affective variables such as motivation, personality, attitude, self-esteem and anxiety affect L2 oral performance. Anxiety has been frequently cited as having a negative impact on oral communication (Philips, 1992; Aida, 1994; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Horwitz, 2001; Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001; Matsuda & Gobel, 2003; Oya et al., 2004). The literature suggests that anxious language learners suffer significantly during oral activities, which supports the notion that anxiety affects L2 performance (Dörnyei, 2005). Although studies suggest that anxiety has a negative impact on learners' attitudes toward language study, it was not until the early 1980s that instruments to test anxiety became more reliable.

Scovel's (1978) seminal work introduced a systematic analysis of research into anxiety and suggested that investigations provided "...mixed and confusing results, immediately suggesting that anxiety itself is neither a simple nor well-understood psychological construct and that it is perhaps premature to attempt to relate it to the global and comprehensive task of language acquisition..." (p.132). The main problem was that anxiety was viewed from a "multi-dimensional perspective" (p.134), not a single construct, but a cluster of affective variables. Since then, researchers in the area have directed their attention from language learning to applied psychology, and have improved methods of

anxiety measurement while providing a more precise concept of anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Young, 1991).

The term anxiety has been defined in three ways. The first, *trait anxiety*, refers to a person's predisposition to become anxious in a wide range of situations (Spielberger, 1983). Individuals with a high level of trait anxiety are often nervous with an unstable emotional state; those who have a low level of trait anxiety are considered emotionally stable (Goldberg, 1993). Spielberger (1983) explains that trait anxiety refers to the level of anxiety people experience in any situation, regardless of context. *State anxiety*, on the other hand, differs from trait anxiety and is related to the apprehension experienced at a particular moment in time (Spielberger, 1983). Individuals experiencing state anxiety may become nervous or anxious prior to taking an examination or during an oral test; however, state anxiety scales may not provide reliable and precise results, as they often neglect investigating the source of the reported anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Therefore, the need to provide an alternative to measure more specific sources of anxiety led to the development of the concept of *situation-specific anxiety*, in which a narrower and more specific context plays an important role. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) explain that a person who has situation-specific anxiety is likely to become anxious because of a specific situation, such as giving a speech, taking a test, or using a second language. The main difference between state and situation-specific anxiety is that the latter is particularly attributed to measures limited to a specific context.

The discussion of trait, state, and situation-specific anxiety provides a more comprehensive understanding of what used to be simply considered "anxiety". For example, foreign language anxiety is reflected in specific situations related to environments of foreign



language learning and is felt when one is required to use a foreign language (MacIntyre, 1999). Therefore, in L2 learning contexts, it seems more plausible to use instruments that measure situation-specific anxiety.

Horwitz et al. (1986) identified three situation-specific variables under the scope of foreign language anxiety (FLA): communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is “a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people” (p. 127), including situations in which learners have to speak in public, groups or dyads, or situations involving listening in the foreign language. Test-anxiety refers to “a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure” (p. 127). Learners are often afraid of making errors and feel pressured and apprehensive in test situations. Fear of negative evaluation is related to “certain beliefs about language learning [that] also contribute to the student’s tension and frustration in the classroom” (p. 127). Some learners believe they should start to speak in an L2 only when they master grammatical accuracy, rather than taking risks. Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that “beliefs such as these must produce anxiety since students are expected to communicate in the second tongue before fluency is attained...” (p. 127). Because learners are often expected to communicate in the second language to attain fluency, there is reason to believe that those who suffer from fear of negative evaluation struggle to reach satisfactory levels of fluency.

Previous studies have mainly investigated foreign language learners in high school or university settings. Little attention has been given to investigate FLA among young language learners, possibly because FLA is often viewed as more relevant to language learning among adults (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). In addition, the extent that current teaching practices contribute to FLA is unknown; there is no study that has systematically compared FLA in

two distinct classroom settings. The current study investigates whether a drama-based program, with elements of process- and product-oriented approaches, lowers anxiety while speaking the L2. It is important to note that of the three FLA factors, communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation are the two factors under the term FLSA, while test anxiety is not considered in this study.

### **Summary of Chapter Two**

The literature on process- and product-oriented drama approaches in L2 learning reviewed in this chapter suggests that drama enhances learners' communicative skills and reduces anxiety; however, while there is evidence to believe that drama-based approaches positively impact oral communication and anxiety, the studies reviewed provide insufficient information regarding the methods used for data collection and analyses, leading to difficulties in authenticating the results. In addition, it is unclear whether drama improves two particular dimensions of L2 learning: oral fluency or FLSA.

The studies on oral fluency reviewed in this chapter suggest a relationship between L2 oral fluency and variations across task types. Depending on the task performed, learners are perceived as more or less fluent. While oral productions of speakers of various linguistic backgrounds have been examined, there remains a need to expand this investigation by studying fluency productions of speakers of other languages. Also, no studies to date have compared untrained raters' fluency assessments of L2 speakers from two distinct classroom settings, for example a drama and a non-drama based language program.

In addition to task types, psychological factors such as willingness to communicate, impact fluency. The literature on anxiety reviewed in this chapter show how FLA is reflected in language learning and oral communication. Anxiety is reflected mainly when learners are

required to speak in the L2. Yet, it is unknown whether learners who experience a drama-based program would have lower levels of FLSA compared to a non-drama program.

### CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology of the present study, including selection of site and participants, an outline of the EFL programs, followed by the rating procedures, the research design, and data analysis.

#### **Schools**

The study took place at two separate locations of a private language institute in the metropolitan area of São Paulo, Brazil. Seventeen locations constitute the institute, each in different neighbourhoods. Each location shares common features to ensure similar services: the courses offered, the course materials, and the instructional practices are the same.

The locations selected are in two of the most affluent neighbourhoods of São Paulo. Professional connections and twelve years teaching experience in the institute allowed access to the classes. The teacher training coordinator and I selected the two participating locations based on the number of courses offered in August 2010, when the data collection began. They both had two courses each, with approximately the same number of learners enrolled. The manager and pedagogical coordinator of each participating location were contacted and a decision regarding treatment and control groups were made. Four teachers were assigned to teach the course prior to the commencement of the data collection, and although they were not self-selected, there was no objection to participation. The coordinators in the two locations briefly explained the nature of the research to the teachers, who were consulted about the possibility of not using the drama component of the program, although still being required to follow a communicative approach to language learning. Two teachers in one location had previously used an oral presentation project in other programs and suggested this

could be a suitable alternative to substitute for the drama component. Furthermore, these two teachers agreed that this substitution would not disrupt the flow of the program.

### **General Description of the EFL Programs**

Two EFL programs (drama-based and non-drama-based) were delivered over a period of four months. They were each 74 hours, distributed across 37 days (i.e., two 2-hour classes per week). Both programs followed communicative and task-based approaches, and included identical pedagogical materials: Granger's (2004) fourth level of the EFL course book series *Creative English*; a laboratory booklet with focus on pronunciation, listening and intonation; a worksheet booklet with extra activities that complement the content of the course book; and a teacher's guide with suggestions on how to use the material. The laboratory booklet and the teachers' guide were designed by the course developers of the language institute. In the laboratory classes, learners recorded their L2 speech, focusing on phonological elements of segmental (consonant and vowel sounds) and suprasegmental features (pitch, stress, and rhythm). Learners had the laboratory classes after they had practiced new linguistic items studied in class. For example, after approximately 4 or 5 hours of class instruction, learners would have a one-hour laboratory class. The classes included two phases: the first phase comprised a recording of approximately 30 non-stop minutes of listening and speaking time. The purpose of the first phase is to provide learners with opportunities to respond to stimuli in "real-time". During the second phase, lasting 30 minutes, learners would listen to their own recordings and re-record their speech when desired. The teacher monitored learners' recorded oral production by listening to their performance in both the first and second phase, although interruptions could only be made in the second phase. In the second phase, learners were invited to press a button to call the teacher when they had questions or were not able to

perform the task successfully. The laboratory classes provided practice with English sounds, especially those that pose challenges to Brazilian Portuguese speakers (see sample in appendix A).

### **The Drama-Based EFL Program**

The drama-based component of the larger curriculum used in this study was the result of earlier work I conducted. Although not an expert in the field of drama or theatre, I began to apply some process- and product-oriented drama activities in my own EFL classes after receiving a certificate in theatre studies in 2003. The school administration took an interest in my teaching practices and I was subsequently invited to develop some drama activities to complement Level 7 of the EFL program. Prior to this study, these activities had never formally been assessed for their efficacy; however, they were piloted prior to their formal implementation in the school curriculum in 2004 (Moreira, A. T. P., & Galante, A., 2004). Given the fact that experts in drama and theatre were not consulted in the development of this curriculum, it should be understood as the use of drama-based activities only loosely follow practices found in drama and theatre, rather than closely adhering to any particular professional approach.

The decision to integrate drama-based instruction into the seventh level of the EFL course for pre-intermediate learners stemmed from two primary considerations: 1) learners at this level have enough knowledge of the L2 to maintain active participation in drama activities using the L2 only. Level 7 is considered to be the equivalent of levels A2/B1 in CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). Introducing a drama-based program at an earlier stage would conflict with the school's policy, which encourages learners to speak only English. The use of the L1 is only allowed in situations in which

instruction in English cannot be achieved; 2) the duration of the programs' basic level course is 37 hours and the department responsible for course development decided to introduce a pre-intermediate course with 74 hours, allowing the introduction of a drama component.

The drama portion of the course consists of both process- and product-oriented drama practices (see sample in appendix B). The process-drama activities were adapted from Kao and O'Neill (1998), Spolin (1989), and Booth and Lundy (1985). Although dated, these three sources were consulted to provide practical ideas for drama activities. The activities suggested by these sources were not used in their published state. Instead, they were revised to fit an L2 learning environment. The process activities should not be considered dramatic or theatrical in the purist sense, but simply borrowed from drama. It is important to note that they were not intended to provide learners with acting training or in-depth dramatic and theatrical studies. Rather, they allowed a focus on particular dimensions of oral communication, including the use of prior and new knowledge of lexical items, pronunciation, intonation, accuracy, improvisation, prosodic features, decision-making, and others.

The product-oriented drama activities involve the study, rehearsal, and presentation of a short play or scene of approximately 15 minutes (see sample in appendix C).

Approximately fifty per cent of the drama-based EFL program is dedicated to these types of drama practices. The drama and regular EFL activities are blended into a 100 minute lesson, including linguistic and situational elements from the regular textbook. For example, when a lesson focuses on particular lexical units, the drama activities are designed to invite learners to practice the same linguistic items (see sample of a product-oriented drama activity in appendix B).

Typically, the course develops in the following sequence: the program begins with teachers explaining the “drama project” and that learners will be exposed to dramatic activities, possibly evolving into an informal presentation of a play or scene. Approximately halfway through the program, plays and scenes are presented to learners, who make a decision about which to rehearse and perform. Plays were adapted based on the learners’ language proficiency, appropriateness of content, and the number of characters and scenes, which were made available to the teachers. Each play typically includes 10-12 characters, with lines evenly distributed across participants. To help with implementation, teachers’ guidelines for each play were created, and props and costumes for each scene with a soundtrack were also recommended. If learners wish to choose another play or a scene, the teacher is responsible for making the necessary adaptation, which is often done in collaboration with the learners. However, in such cases, it is not apparent which adaptations are accidental or intentional. It is difficult to determine whether the material was adapted for a particular purpose or spontaneously through improvisation. The primary aim of the rehearsal is that learners study the meaning of their lines. Rote memorization is not the focus, and learners are invited to improvise their lines and suggest changes when necessary. Any changes are made under the guidance of the teacher. Learners are also encouraged to work on character development.

The performance of the play/scene is not mandatory, but is left to learners’ discretion. Anecdotal accounts over the past few years suggest that most learners are motivated to present a final performance. The venue for the presentation is typically the school’s courtyard or a classroom, rather than a formal theatre. The learners in the drama-based program under investigation did not choose any of the adapted plays provided. Rather, one class chose to



perform two scenes (“The New James Bond” and “The Bank”) from a separately identified source. The other class chose to perform an episode of a TV show (*The Big Bang Theory*), which was adapted by the teacher and the learners. Both classes chose to perform in front of an audience, consisting of parents and friends, and had their performances video-recorded.

Teachers who have previously taught in this program have reported improvement in learners’ oral skills, motivation and willingness to participate in oral activities in class, although there is no formal documentation this is the case. Due to the lack of formal evidence to support these anecdotal accounts, though, such comments might not reflect reality. In addition, the efficacy of the drama-based program has never been formally assessed.

### **The Non-Drama-Based EFL Program**

The non-drama-based program included the same materials described in the first section of this chapter, with the exception of the drama-based component. To ensure that the drama activities were not used in the control classes, I met with the teachers who were to deliver the program and ensured that the drama-based practices were not included. The teachers who had suggested delivering an oral presentation in the place of the drama-based component confirmed it would make up all the time typically allotted to drama-based activities. The presentation project that was assigned required learners to take part in open-ended discussions in class, do readings of their own interest, complete a research project, and prepare and deliver oral presentations in front of the class (see sample in appendix D). The themes for the oral presentations were often suggested by the learners, and therefore, reflect their own interests. Some suggested themes included: music, sports, trips, movies, books, among others. The oral presentation project allowed learners to use prior and new knowledge of lexical items, practice pronunciation, intonation, and accuracy, and engage in open-ended

discussions in class. Approximately fifty per cent of the non-drama-based EFL program was dedicated to the oral presentation project.

### Participants

In what follows, the participants of this study are defined and described: teachers, learners, and raters.

#### Teachers

As indicated in Table 1, two EFL classes participated at each location. Four teachers, two each in the treatment and control groups, delivered the instructional program.

*Table 1*

Allocation of Teachers and Groups

Treatment Group: Drama-Based EFL Program School 1	Control Group: Non-Drama-Based EFL Program School 2
Class 1 – Teacher A	Class 3 – Teacher C
Class 2 – Teacher B	Class 4 – Teacher D

The requirements for teachers joining the teaching staff of the language institute include previous experience teaching EFL, a university or college degree, and an international certification of proficiency in English (Cambridge, Michigan, IELTS). In addition, it is mandatory that teachers take a 50-hour training course offered by the institute. Teachers in training attend sessions on EFL theory and practice, and prepare and present micro-teaching lessons to a group of teacher trainers.

The four teachers in the study were female non-native speakers of English, born in São Paulo, Brazil, ranging in age from 26 to 38. Their levels or experience varied from three to 16 years in EFL teaching practice. The teachers who delivered the drama-based program

(i.e., treatment group) did not have previous experience in drama or theatre, but had taught this program four times prior to the current study.

All teachers were informed that research would be carried out to investigate learners' communication ability; however, details of the two major foci of the current study – oral fluency and FLSA – were not provided. In addition, the teachers did not know which students would participate in the research and which, if any, might opt out.

### **Learners**

Upon receiving approval from Brock University Research Ethics Board (see appendix E), I travelled to Brazil to explain the nature of the research to the learners and their parents. Participants' parents were informed of the details of the study and their children were invited to participate in the research. Upon parents' agreement to allow their children's participation in the study, parental and participant consent forms were distributed. Although participants were given permission by their parents, if they did not wish to be part of the study, their data was not collected. I stressed the fact that learners' data would not be evaluated for the purposes of the EFL program and that their participation would allow me to find valuable answers to questions about classroom activities. Also, learners were told they could ask any questions or stop performing the speaking tasks or the interview if they did not feel comfortable at any point during the data collection. If a learner were to experience any emotional stress, their participation in the study would be interrupted. Once consent forms were returned, the data collection process commenced. Data from twenty-seven participants were collected at T1. At T2, data from all but three of the original learners were collected. One learner had left the program because her family moved to another city, and two others

were unable to meet me due to a scheduling conflict. The data from these three learners were not used in the analysis.

As Table 2 indicates, twenty-four pre-intermediate EFL learners participated in this study (11 female and 13 male; ages 12-16,  $M=13.8$ ). There were 13 learners (4 female and 9 male,  $M=14.3$ ) in School 1, and 11 (7 female and 4 male,  $M=13.4$ ) in School 2.

*Table 2*

Allocation of Learners in Each Group

Treatment Group: Drama-Based EFL Program School 1	Control Group: Non-Drama-Based EFL Program School 2
Group 1 – 5 male	Group 3 – 2 female and 3 male
Group 2 – 4 female and 4 male	Group 4 – 5 female and 1 male

All learners had either completed six levels of the EFL course in the school, or had been previously assessed by the school coordinator to be at level 7. They all belonged to the same socio-economic class and shared similar lifestyles (i.e., similar opportunities to travel abroad, access to practice English outside school, and interests).

## **Raters**

Rater recruitment posters were posted in public places on Brock University's campus (see appendix F). Some faculty members also helped recruit raters by sharing the call for participants with their students. Ratings of the EFL learners' speech samples were obtained from listeners who met the following four criteria:

1) Untrained native speakers of English. The aim of recruiting untrained listeners was to investigate how ordinary people perceived the EFL learners' speech samples and judged fluency, comprehensibility and accent;

2) Born and raised in Canada. This measure was taken to ensure that raters shared a similar linguistic background and thus, have similar perception of fluency, comprehensibility and accent;

3) Must not have spent more than 10 years abroad in a country where English is not the L1. Participants who had been born in Canada, but had lived in a foreign country for an extended period of time, could have different perceptions of Canadian native-like speech;

4) No previous knowledge of Portuguese. This measure was taken to avoid familiarity effects in the perception of fluency, comprehensibility, and accent;

5) Participants must have normal hearing.

A background questionnaire was used to gather information from raters (see appendix G). Thirty raters were recruited (27 female and 3 male; ages 18 - 46,  $M = 22.2$ ). All were students (29 undergraduate and one graduate) enrolled in various programs at Brock University (10 in Applied Linguistics; five each in Psychology and Speech and Language Sciences; two each in Business Administration, General Studies and TESL Certification; and one each in Sociology, Child and Youth Studies, Biology, and Political Science). Twenty-seven were born in Ontario, two in Quebec, and one in Alberta. They were all native English speakers with the exception of one rater, who reported having French as an L1, but learned English at the age of three. At the time of the data collection, all thirty participants reported living in Ontario. Six reported having lived in another country (two in Thailand, one each in Japan, France, Ireland, Cameroon and Indonesia) for a period of less than two years. Twenty-six had studied other languages (25 French, nine Spanish, three Italian, two each Chinese and Japanese, one each Cambodian, Latin, Gaelic, Thai, and Indonesian). Seven reported speaking another language fluently (five French, one each Spanish, Gaelic and Latin). None

had studied Portuguese or lived in Portuguese-speaking countries, and none indicated ongoing exposure to Portuguese-accented speech. They all reported having normal hearing.

### Procedures

In this section, the procedures of this study are described: research design, data collection and analysis, followed by transcription challenges.

#### Research Design

Researchers face numerous limitations when conducting classroom-based studies. For example, controlling variables and assigning subjects to special groups are often discouraged by school administrators, amidst fears of interference with ongoing programs. As a result, a quasi-experimental design is typically used when research in schools is carried out since it utilizes existing groups and provides an advantage over other research designs considering it “requires the least amount of disruption of school routines.” (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 142). Following this tradition, a quasi-experimental research design was used in this study.

#### Data collection

The data collection consisted of three steps both at T1 and T2, as shown in Table 3.

*Table 3*

Data Collection at T1 and T2

Time 1	Time 2
Step 1: learners filled out a demographic questionnaire (appendix H)	Step 1: learners filled out the modified version of the FLCAS (appendix I)
Step 2: learners filled out the modified version of the FLCAS (appendix I)	Step 2: learners took part in the speech recording session
Step 3: learners took part in the speech recording session	Step 3: learners took part in the semi-structured interview

Although the research was carried out in the school where learners attended, the teachers did not know who wished to participate in the study. Learners' parents scheduled a convenient time for the data to be individually collected.

### **Pre- and Post-test Speaking Tasks**

Pre- and post-test speaking tasks were used to assess L2 oral fluency, comprehensibility, and accent performance over time. The tests were identical, so as not to affect the internal validity of the findings. Each learner was required to perform five speaking tasks:

1) Look at a set of pictures and narrate the story in either 1st or 3rd person (see appendix J). Half of participants were assigned to each perspective. The set of pictures illustrates a story about a student who is late for school;

2) Watch a video about a friendship between a bird and boy and narrate the story. Skehan and Foster (1999) suggested that learners' fluency levels are higher in a "watch first and then tell the story" condition, compared to watch and tell the story simultaneously. In this study, learners were required to watch the video first and then tell the story. The video can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hvox-lWanZU>;

3) Role-play a situation with the researcher about welcoming a foreign student into their country (see appendix K);

4) Perform a monologue about the best trip they had taken in their lives;

5) Repeat the first picture description task using 3<sup>rd</sup> person narration if they used 1<sup>st</sup> person narration in the first task, or vice versa. The order of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrations was balanced across learners.

Learners performed the tasks individually and the speech samples were recorded using a digital audio-recorder. They were allowed 30-45 seconds after the explanation of each task to prepare and become familiar with the task and topic. They were also allowed to ask questions prior to beginning the recording.

### **Rating Procedures**

The raters completed the rating tasks in four small groups. Each group had two 2-hour meetings to rate the speech samples for a total of four hours. The meetings took place in a large study room in the James A. Gibson Library at Brock University and the same audio equipment was used in all four meetings. Since there were four groups of raters, four different randomized speech samples were provided, each with 240 samples (24 EFL speakers performing five tasks at two different times). The samples were presented randomly. That is, speech samples from various tasks and test times were mixed so that raters could not identify from which time (Time 1 or 2) the samples were obtained. To avoid order of presentation effects, four different randomizations were created. Seven raters were assigned to Randomization 1, seven to Randomization 2, seven to Randomization 3, and nine to Randomization 4.

A pre-rating task, including three samples of EFL speakers that were not used in this study, was added to the stimulus set to verify that raters agreed on how to judge the samples. A female narrating a first person picture narration, another female narrating a video, and a male performing a monologue comprised the samples taken from data collected at T1, but not at T2. These samples were not part of the research analysis and were used only to provide an example of how to perform the rating tasks. The three practice items were presented before



the main rating task to demonstrate the possible range of productions. After playing the three pre-rating samples, raters discussed how the speech samples should be rated.

The speech samples comprised approximately 20 seconds, extracted from the beginning of four tasks: 1st person picture narration, 3rd person picture narration, video narration, and monologue. Because some speakers started the task by repeating the questions asked or by thinking out loud, initial false starts, hesitations or speech unrelated to the topic of the task were removed. Samples from the start of each task ensured that content was held relatively constant across speakers and times. Because the role-play was longer than the other tasks (more than 2 minutes each), a 1:20 minute excerpt was taken from the beginning of each sample. This method was applied as a way to ensure that raters had enough exposure to the EFL learners' speech, since this particular task included the researcher's voice role-playing the task with them.

In addition to false starts, the end of the 20-second and 1:20-minute speech samples were also edited. If a learner was in the middle of a sentence when the speech reached 20 seconds, the sample was either edited prior to the commencement of a new clause, or after the clause was complete. This measure was taken to minimize dysfluencies and not to impact raters' comprehensibility levels. Research has previously shown that playing the entire role-play or only the first minute has resulted in similar ratings. Derwing et al. (2004) compared analyses of full recordings to their first minute and did not find significant variations in fluency within tasks. Therefore, such variation does not affect the sample itself. All the speech samples were edited and their volume normalized.

The raters were instructed on how fluency, comprehensibility, and accentedness should be measured. Fluency judgments should be based on factors such as speech rate, filled

pauses (hums and uhs), self-corrections or self-repetition, and silent pauses, as well as the overall flow of speech. It was clearly indicated that grammar and lexical knowledge should not be taken into consideration. This clarification was needed to distinguish ‘fluency’ from ‘proficiency’, a strategy previously employed by Munro, Derwing and Morton (2006). For judgments of comprehensibility, the raters were asked to indicate how easy or difficult the speech samples were to understand. Accentedness judgments were based on how the EFL learners’ accent was similar or different from the raters’ variety. In previous studies, such instructions were found sufficient and resulted in reliable ratings (Derwing & Munro 1997; Derwing et al. 2004, Munro et al. 2006; Derwing et al. 2007). Finally, raters were shown the picture and the video used in the narrative tasks, and the script of the role-play task. This measure was employed to minimize the effect of content familiarity on raters’ judgment of later items relative to earlier items.

After listening to and discussing how to achieve a rating for each of the three examples, the full rating task began: raters listened to each speech recordings and were given five seconds after each sample to make their judgment (see appendix L for rating speech measures). Three 9-point scales were used for each sample, fluency (1 = very fluent to 9 = very dysfluent), comprehensibility (1 = very easy to understand to 9 = very hard to understand), and accent (1 = no foreign accent to 9 = very strong foreign accent). Each rating session took approximately two hours, with a mandatory break at the mid-point to reduce rater fatigue. Water and snacks were also provided for raters. Upon completion of the rating tasks, each rater received 40 Canadian dollars.

### **Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Measure**

Horwitz et al. (1986) designed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale - FLCAS (see appendix M) to measure three main variables in language anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. This scale has been used in a large number of research studies (Horwitz, 1986; Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999; Horwitz, 2001; Ay, 2010) and is found both reliable and valid.

For the purpose of the present study, a modified version of the original FLCAS (see appendix I) was developed to make the instrument more suitable for EFL adolescent learners and the factors under investigation. Anxiety related to test situations was not a concern of this study. Therefore, seven questions related to test anxiety were excluded and the final version resulted in 26 items. The wording was also modified slightly to better suit the language learning setting (EFL) and the terms “foreign language” and “language” were substituted with “English”. The questionnaire was translated into Portuguese, the learners’ L1 to ensure that learners had a clear understanding of the items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire, along with its translation, was provided to learners. Based on a five-point Likert scale, the modified FLCAS scale sought responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Previous studies have analyzed the data from the FLCAS differently, such as through percentages (Horwitz et al., 1986) or numerical values (Aida, 1994; Matsuda & Gobel, 2003; Chan & Wu, 2004; Kim, 2009; Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Ay, 2010). Given that the current study aims to investigate levels of FLSA quantitatively, a numerical value was given to each response to the 26 items: 1 was assigned to “strongly disagree”, 2 “disagree”, 3 “neither agree nor disagree”, 4 “agree” and 5 “strongly agree”. The numerical values were reversed when items

of the scale were worded negatively. Scores below three represent low levels of FLSA, whereas scores higher than three indicate some level of FLSA.

The questionnaire was administered to all learners in both the treatment and control groups at T1 (week 1), and T2 (week 17), two weeks prior to the end of the program. The instrument was not precisely applied after the end of the program for two main reasons: 1) it would be less viable to contact learners after the end of the program since the data were collected in the school where participants took the course; 2) learners in the drama program would informally perform a scene or a theatre play at the end of the program, which could alter the results of the questionnaire: learners might have experienced stage fright, which could be an influential factor in their responses to the questionnaire.

### **Interviews**

During the last week of the program (week 17), after learners had completed the post-tests, individual semi-structured interviews with all 24 participants were carried out (see interview guide in appendix N). The purpose of the interview was to collect learners' impressions about their comfort level while speaking the L2. The interview questions were also based on Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS. In addition, examples of situations, taken from Horwitz et al.'s (1986) scale were included to help learners recall any particular anxiety inducing or reducing moments. Examples such as "*when the teacher asked for volunteers to answer questions*" or "*when you had to make presentations in front of the class*" were provided. A quiet room was used for the interviews, which took approximately five minutes, and were audio-recorded.

## Data Analysis

For the first research question (*Do learners in a drama-based EFL program experience more gains in oral fluency compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program? And do any resulting gains depend on the type of speaking task?*), the data were analyzed quantitatively following Derwing et al. (2004). Similar methodology has been used in numerous studies (Derwing & Munro 1997; Derwing et al., 2004; Munro et al., 2006; Derwing et al., 2007). All ratings were pooled and mean ratings for each speaker on the five tasks were computed for fluency, comprehensibility, and accent. After gathering the mean ratings for each speech sample, repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were carried out.

For the second research question (*Do learners in a drama-based EFL program experience lower levels of foreign language speaking anxiety compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program?*), the data were also analyzed quantitatively. A numerical value was assigned to answers to the twenty-six items from the modified FLCAS questionnaire (Horwitz et al., 1986) and a repeated-measures ANOVA was carried out: This methodology has been used in numerous studies (Aida, 1994; Matsuda & Gobel, 2003; Chan & Wu, 2004; Kim, 2009; Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Ay, 2010).

For the third research question (*How are foreign language speaking anxiety and oral fluency interrelated?*), a Pearson's correlation test was carried out to explore whether there is a relationship between fluency, comprehensibility, accent and FLSA.

Finally, for the fourth research question (*What are learners' beliefs about moments in the EFL classroom that either reduced or increased anxiety levels during speaking tasks?*), the data were analyzed qualitatively from transcriptions of the semi-structured interviews.

The recorded interviews with the twenty-four learners from both treatment and control groups were transcribed and the analyses based on reported moments that contributed to or lowered anxiety levels: main themes that were recurrently reported were also included in the analyses. For example, if a learner reported being too shy to speak the L2 in class, “shyness” was interpreted as a theme.

### **Transcription Challenges**

Transcribing recorded interviews presents several challenges that should be addressed as they may pose limitations from a methodological standpoint (Tilley, 2003). Those with the strongest potential to influence the results of this study were: quality of the recording, transcription process, and subjectivity in perceiving the meaning of words.

Background noise is a factor that may interfere in the recording quality. Although I chose to carry out individual interviews in an empty room, it was virtually impossible to maintain a quiet environment. Both schools had a bell that went off every hour and is heard in several recordings. This noise, however, was not loud enough to interfere with the intelligibility of the recording. Another factor that may interfere in the recording quality is speakers' speech, which can be too soft, accented, or unclear (Poland, 1995). During the interviews, most learners spoke loud and clear. Two speakers spoke softly and were asked to hold the recorder against their mouth so it would capture clear speech. Another learner had a sore throat on the day scheduled for the interview; therefore, she was asked to reschedule it on a day when her voice would be clearly heard.

Poland (1995) has pointed out that transcribers who are well meaning tend to “clean” the transcriptions, which includes making grammatical and morphological modifications in order to make the speech more accurate. The interviews of this study were transcribed

verbatim, and no grammatical or morphological corrections were made. Two conventionalized notations were used: ellipsis, indicating a pause in breathing or a pause in thinking, and full stops, indicating a concluding sentence. Since the purpose of the interviews was to collect data that contributed/lowered language anxiety, there seemed to be no room for different interpretations; therefore, other transcription approaches, gathering emotional responses (e.g., laughter), for example, did not seem to be necessary for this study.

Considering analysis occurs during the transcription process, it is suggested that researchers, rather than assistants or proficient typists, transcribe the data themselves (Tilley, 2003). In the quest of consistency, I was the only transcriber of the interviews. Also, given the fact that I share the same L1 as the speakers', accented speech did not pose challenges to the overall understanding of the utterances.

As Tilley (2003) suggests, decisions related to transcription should be made to better suit the purpose of a given research. The challenges described above were addressed to minimize methodological limitations, although they do not necessarily guarantee the best transcription process.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter reports the findings of the study based on each research question.

### Research Question One

The first research question asked: “Do learners in a drama-based program experience more gains in oral fluency compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program? And do any resulting gains depend on the type of speaking task?”. Following Derwing et al. (2004), the EFL learners’ speech sample ratings were separated into three categories: fluency, comprehensibility, and accent. In this study, to assess inter-rater agreement, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were computed for all 240 speech samples for each scale, with scores of .95, .94, and .87 for fluency, comprehensibility and accent ratings, respectively. These scores indicate an acceptable level of inter-rater agreement. Based on these findings, listeners’ ratings for fluency, comprehensibility, and accent for each speech sample were then pooled across tasks to find the mean score for each item.

Three repeated measures ANOVA were carried out for: fluency, comprehensibility, and accent. The three ANOVAs included Task (five levels) and Time (two levels) as within-subject factors and Group as the between-subject factor. Post-hoc independent and dependent samples t-tests were also carried out where appropriate.

#### Fluency

The ANOVA for fluency ratings revealed significant effects for Time and a significant Time X Group interaction (see Table 4, appendix O). The effect for Time,  $F(1, 22) = 39.071$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .640$ , indicates that fluency significantly improved between T1 and T2 for all learners combined. The interaction between Time and Group,

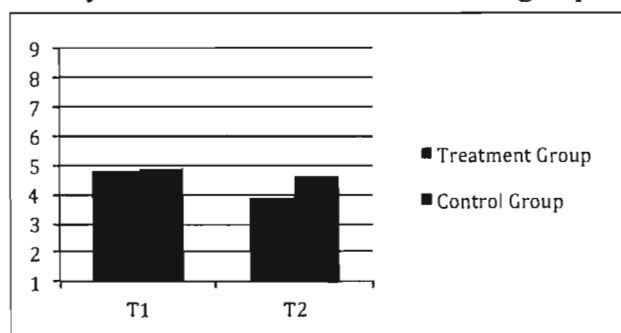


$F(1,22) = 13.940, p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .388$  indicates that fluency levels differed significantly over time between groups. There were no significant effects for Task,  $F(4, 88) = 1.623, p = .064$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .095$ , or for Group,  $F(1, 22) = 1.805, p = .193$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .076$ .

Figure 1 illustrates mean scores for fluency ratings across groups and time. It is important to note that the scale ranged from 1 (very fluent) to 9 (very dysfluent).

Figure 1

Fluency scores for treatment and control groups at T1 and T2



The figure shows that fluency levels among learners from both groups were similar at T1 but differed at T2. Fluency scores for participants in the treatment group were  $M = 4.7$  at T1 and  $M = 3.8$  at T2. Scores for participants in the control group were  $M = 4.8$  at T1 and  $M = 4.6$  at T2. To test whether this result was significant, independent samples t-tests were conducted to probe the Time X Group interaction. There was no significant difference between groups at T1,  $t(118) = -4.70, p = .639$ , suggesting that both groups had similar fluency levels at the commencement of the program. There was a significant difference in fluency scores between groups at T2,  $t(118) = -4.263, p < .001$ , indicating that fluency levels among learners in the treatment group were significantly higher after the treatment compared to learners in the control group (Tables 5 and 6, appendix O).

Post-hoc Bonferroni adjusted paired t-tests, with the criterion for significance set to  $p < .025$ , were used to evaluate within-group performance, that is, how participants in both groups performed over time. The tests revealed a significant improvement in fluency scores for participants in the treatment group from T1 to T2,  $t(64) = 7.853, p < .001$ . In contrast, the mean fluency scores for participants in the control group did not significantly from T1 to T2,  $t(54) = 1.575, p = .121$  (Table 7, appendix O).

Although the ANOVA for fluency ratings did not show a significant effect for Task, Table 8 shows learners' mean scores for each task at both T1 and T2.

*Table 8*  
Fluency scores for each task

	Treatment Group T1	Control Group T1	Treatment Group T2	Control Group T2
First Person Picture Narration	4.3	4.9	3.4	4.4
Third Person Picture Narration	4.8	5.0	3.8	4.2
Video Narration	4.8	4.9	4.0	4.6
Role-Play	5.0	4.9	4.2	4.9
Monologue	4.6	4.4	3.7	4.8

As previously noted, the treatment group and the control group each comprised two intact English classes, taught by two different teachers. This was done to provide a modicum of control for the teacher as a potentially contributing factor. That is, if the treatment condition showed an effect, this should be the case for both classes in the treatment group. Conversely, both classes in the control group should also behave similarly. If this were not the case, it would increase the possibility that differences between treatment and control groups might be attributable to one very effective (or very ineffective) teacher. Mean differences at T1 and T2 were calculated for each of the classes. At least descriptively, these results suggest that both classes in the treatment group had similar gains in oral fluency over time whereas both classes in the control group similarly lacked fluency gains. For the

treatment group, the mean difference for Teacher A (Group 1) between T1 and T2 was 0.81 whereas for Teacher B (Group 2) the mean difference was 0.94. The mean difference between Teacher A and Teacher B was 0.13, suggesting a small variation between teachers. For the control group, the mean difference for learners' in Teacher C's class (Group 3) between T1 and T2 was 0.34 and for Teacher D (Group 4) it was 0.06. The mean difference between Teacher C and Teacher D was 0.28, again suggesting a small variation between learners' performance in each of these classes.

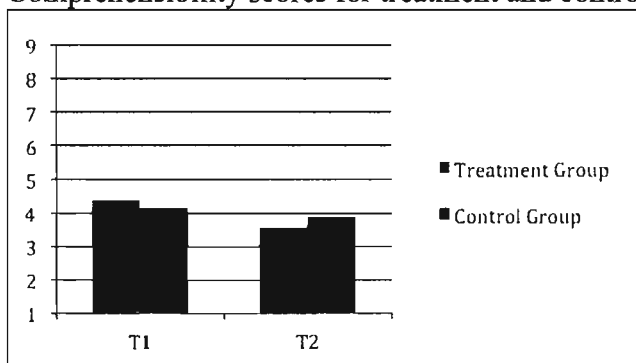
### **Comprehensibility**

The ANOVA for comprehensibility ratings revealed significant effects for Time, Task, as well as a significant Time X Group interaction (see Table 9, appendix P). The effect for Time,  $F(1, 22) = 33.408, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .603$ , indicates that comprehensibility significantly improved between T1 and T2. The effect for Task,  $F(4, 88) = 3.411, p = .012$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .134$ , indicates that comprehensibility was significantly different in relation to the task performed. Finally, the interaction between Time and Group,  $F(1, 22) = 7.089, p = .014$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .244$ , indicates that comprehensibility levels differed significantly over time between groups. No significant difference in comprehensibility was found for Group,  $F(1, 22) = .024, p = .879$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .001$ .

Figure 2 illustrates mean scores for comprehensibility ratings across groups and time. The scale ranged from 1 (very easy to understand) to 9 (very hard to understand).

Figure 2

Comprehensibility scores for treatment and control groups at T1 and T2



The figure shows that comprehensibility levels among learners from both groups were slightly different at both T1 and T2. Comprehensibility scores for participants in the treatment group were  $M = 4.3$  at T1 and  $M = 3.5$  at T2. Scores for participants in the control group were  $M = 4.1$  at T1 and  $M = 3.8$  at T2. To test whether this result was significant, independent samples t-tests were conducted to probe the Time X Group interaction. There was no significant difference in comprehensibility scores between groups at T1,  $t(118) = 1.124$ ,  $p = .263$ , or at T2,  $t(118) = -1.927$ ,  $p = .056$  (Tables 10 and 11, appendix P). Although the t-tests failed to establish the source of the significant Time X Group interaction found with the ANOVA, the difference in means suggests that the treatment group improved significantly more over time.

Post-hoc Bonferroni adjusted paired t-tests, with the criterion for significance set to  $p < .025$ , were carried out to investigate within-group performance. The tests revealed a significant difference in comprehensibility scores for participants in both groups over time: the treatment group improved from T1 to T2,  $t(64) = 7.360$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the control group also improved from T1 and T2,  $t(54) = 2.381$ ,  $p = .021$  (Table 12, appendix P).

The ANOVA for comprehensibility ratings showed a significant effect for Task. Table 13 shows learners' mean scores for each task at both T1 and T2.

*Table 13*  
Comprehensibility scores for each task

	Treatment Group T1	Control Group T1	Treatment Group T2	Control Group T2
First Person Picture Narration	4.1	4.0	3.2	3.8
Third Person Picture Narration	4.3	4.1	3.4	3.6
Video Narration	4.3	4.4	3.8	3.9
Role-Play	4.8	4.1	3.8	4.1
Monologue	4.1	4.0	3.5	3.7

A series of ten post-hoc Bonferroni adjusted paired samples t-tests with the criterion for significance set to  $p < 0.005$  (.05 divided by 10) were carried out to compare differences across tasks. A significant difference across tasks was found at T2: learners did better on the first person picture narration compared to the role-play  $t(23) = -3.806, p = .001$ , and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> person picture narration compared to the role-play,  $t(23) = -3.187, p = .004$ . No significant difference for comprehensibility was found across other tasks.

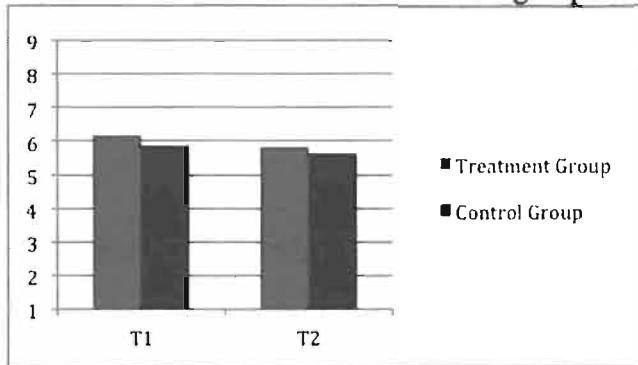
### **Accent**

The ANOVA for accent ratings revealed significant effects for Time,  $F(1, 22) = 18.170, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .452$ , and for Task,  $F(4, 88) = 6.549, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .229$  (see Table 14, appendix Q). These results indicate that accent improved over time and that better accent ratings depended on the task performed. Similar to fluency and comprehensibility ratings, no significant difference for accent scores was found for Group,  $F(1, 22) = 2.059, p = .165$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .086$ . Unlike fluency and comprehensibility, no significant effect was found in the interaction between Time and Group,  $F(1, 22) = .382, p = .543$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .017$ .

Figure 3 illustrates mean scores for accent ratings across groups and time. The scale ranged from 1 (no foreign accent) to 9 (very strong foreign accent).

Figure 3

Accent scores for treatment and control groups at T1 and T2



The figure shows that accent levels among learners from both groups were similar at both T1 and T2. Accent scores for participants in the treatment group were  $M = 6.1$  at T1 and  $M = 5.8$  at T2. Scores for participants in the control group were  $M = 5.8$  at T1 and  $M = 5.6$  at T2.

These results indicate that learners in both groups had significant gains in accent over time.

Considering the ANOVA for accent ratings did not show a significant Time X Group interaction, there was no need to carry out independent samples t-tests.

The ANOVA for accent ratings showed a significant effect for Task. Table 15 shows learners' mean scores for each task at both T1 and T2.

Table 15

Accent scores for each task

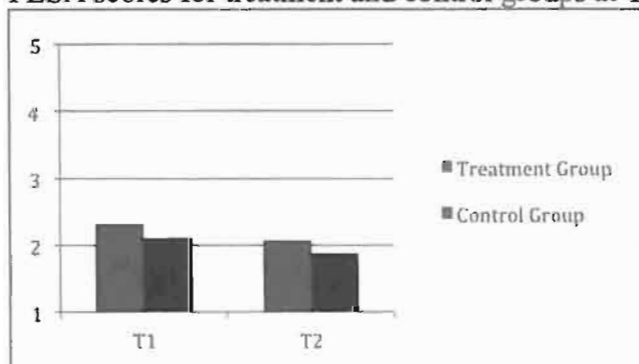
	Treatment Group T1	Control Group T1	Treatment Group T2	Control Group T2
First Person Picture Narration	5.9	5.8	5.5	5.5
Third Person Picture Narration	6.0	5.8	5.7	5.5
Video Narration	6.1	5.9	5.9	5.6
Role-Play	6.5	5.9	6.0	5.9
Monologue	6.2	5.8	5.8	5.4

A series of ten post-hoc Bonferroni adjusted paired samples t-tests with the criterion significance set to  $p < 0.005$  (.05 divided by 10) were carried out to compare differences in accent levels across tasks. A significant difference was found at T1 between the first person picture narration ( $M = 5.8$ ) and the role-play ( $M = 6.2$ ),  $t(23) = -3.245$ ,  $p = .004$ . At T2, there was a significant difference between the first person picture narration ( $M = 5.5$ ) and the role-play ( $M = 5.9$ ),  $t(23) = -4.380$ ,  $p < .001$ , and between the first person picture narration ( $M = 5.5$ ) and the video narration ( $M = 5.8$ ),  $t(23) = -3.156$ ,  $p = .004$ . No significant difference for accent was found between other tasks.

### Research Question Two

The second research question asked whether learners in a drama-based EFL program experience lower levels of FLSA compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program. A repeated-measures ANOVA was carried out on the mean FLSA scores with Time (two levels) as the within-subject factor and Group (two levels) as between-subject factor (Table 16, appendix R). A significant effect was found for Time,  $F(1, 22) = 13.933$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .388$ . No significant effect was found for Time X Group interaction,  $F(1, 22) = .134$ ,  $p = .718$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .066$ , nor between groups,  $F(1, 22) = 1.951$ ,  $p = .176$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .081$ . Figure 7 shows mean scores for both groups at T1 and T2.

Figure 4  
FLSA scores for treatment and control groups at T1 and T2



FLSA scores for participants in the treatment group were  $M = 2.3$  at T1 and  $M = 2.0$  at T2.

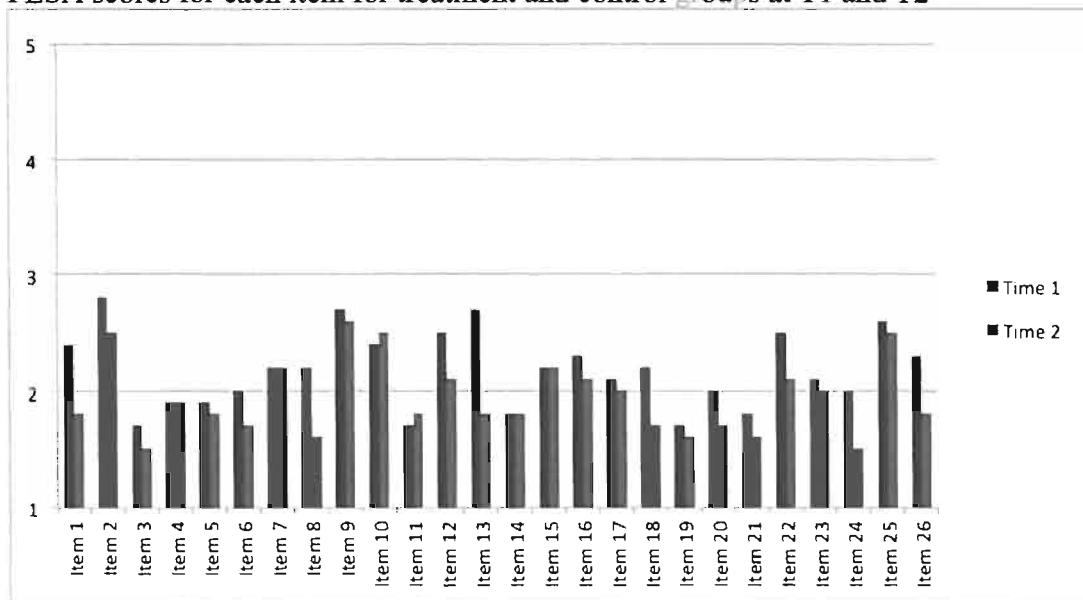
Scores for participants in the control group were  $M = 2.1$  at T1 and  $M = 1.8$  at T2.

Considering that the scale ranged from 1 to 5 points, with higher numbers indicating higher levels of FLSA, it is important to note that both groups experienced low levels of FLSA at both T1 and T2. In addition, there was a positive correlation between FLSA levels at T1 and T2,  $r(24) = .705, p < .001$  (Table 17, appendix R), indicating that the decrease occurred in tandem across participants.

Although the mean FLSA scores suggest low levels of FLSA at both T1 and T2, they do not indicate specific situations in which learners are likely to feel more or less anxious. Figure 5 shows mean scores for each item including data from both groups to give a clearer illustration of differences in response to individual items.

Figure 5

FLSA scores for each item for treatment and control groups at T1 and T2





The items with the lowest scores among learners in both groups at T2 refer to features related to oral speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation from peers or teachers (items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 26). These results suggest that learners in both groups experienced lower levels of FLSA in such situations after the program, than at the outset. Conversely, the items with the highest scores among learners in both groups at T2 refer to features associated with linguistic accuracy, and speaking with native speakers of English (items 2, 9, 10, and 25). These results suggest that although learners generally have low FLSA levels, they are still likely to feel more anxious in situations where they fear making mistakes while speaking, and in interactions that involve native speakers.

### **Research Question Three**

The third research question asked how FLSA and oral fluency are interrelated. Mean fluency, comprehensibility, accent, and FLSA scores for each participant in both treatment and control groups were analyzed. Pearson's  $r$  correlations across the speech ratings and FLSA levels were computed (Table 17, appendix R). At T1, there was no significant correlation between FLSA and oral fluency ( $p = .364$ ), comprehensibility ( $p = .204$ ), or accent ( $p = .185$ ). Similarly, at T2, no significant correlations between FLSA and oral fluency ( $p = .345$ ), comprehensibility ( $p = .248$ ) or accent ( $p = .185$ ) were found. These results do not suggest that overall gains in oral fluency levels were related to lower levels of FLSA.

### **Research Question Four**

The fourth research question asked about moments in the EFL classroom that either reduced or increased learners' anxiety levels during speaking tasks. As previously noted, although the ANOVA on FLSA scores indicates that learners in both groups had low levels of anxiety at both T1 and T2, semi-structured interviews (see interview script in Appendix N)

sought to investigate specific moments in which learners felt more or less comfortable speaking English in class, and discover reasons why this had been the case. This section provides qualitative data from learners' responses with samples of the interviews containing relevant information regarding FLSA. A detailed transcription from each learner is provided in Appendix S. Given that there was no significant difference between FLSA scores between groups, all open-ended interview responses are reported together, with no distinction between treatment and control group, unless specifically relevant.

Six main themes related to moments in the classroom that reduced or increased FLSA levels were identified from the interview data. These themes include reference to an effect of the drama-based program, oral presentations, shyness, the role of teachers in general, relationships with classmates, and learners' attitudes towards learning English.

### **The Drama-based Program**

Learners from the treatment group repeatedly mentioned the drama-based program as influencing their degree of comfort in speaking. For example, four learners expressed being uncomfortable with the introduction of the drama-based program at the commencement of the course:

**Learner 12:** *...the presentation of the...of the...theatre...theatre play...yes...I think it's the only moment I didn't feel very comfortable.*

**Learner 13:** *I think it's when we need to rehearse in the first time...I think...uh...I'm shy so I didn't feel so comfortable...*

**Learner 14:** *uh...in the beginning...when I thought I have to make the play... I get a little shy so I thought that I wouldn't go well...*

**Learner 15:** ... in the beginning of the course...when the tea...when the teacher said to us we have to do the play...we are with very...very fear...you know...we have to do the play...because...we have to memorize the lines...so it was...it was kind of terrible...

The introduction of the drama-based program was interpreted as a requirement to deliver a formal theatre play presentation (product) at the end of the program. This is unsurprising since learners assumed they would have to memorize lines and act in front of an audience. However, once these learners started experiencing the drama-based classes, with process-oriented activities leading to a product, there was a positive shift in their perception:

**Learner 12:** I think what really helped me is...we are training for the play and this help me very much... because we have to speak louder... we have to make eye contact... we have to say everything correctly...

**Learner 13:** I think the play...the play help you to...be a little bit less shy...I don't know... I think it's normal, because rehearsal, we...we...just...uh...I don't know, I just be less shy when I start to practice more and speak more English... the play is very good for it... we need to act and speak English loud...speak English loud help very much...and act too...we make more body language...I don't know...it's good.

**Learner 14:** ... in the rehearsing...I feel very comfortable...uh...when I know my lines it's easy to me to talk because I know what I'm going to say but uh...when I rehearsing...it's very funny so I don't care if I will...uh...I will make mistakes...

**Learner 15:** ... but now is ok...but speaking English in this course was very...was very easy..two months later...from the beginning of the course...make the play...be more comfortable...relaxed...it was very good.

Interestingly, all these respondents indicate that the process of rehearsing the play was beneficial: learners overcame shyness, were required to speak the L2 accurately and project their voices more effectively, became aware of the use of body language, and felt more relaxed in speaking the L2.

Three other learners also indicated that the drama-based program contributed to their degree of comfort when speaking in the L2:

**Learner 16:** *...the presentation is very fun and...I think it's more easy to talk and...interact with the others...I will be the James Bond girl...Lisa...Linda... I feel more comfortable...speaking English... because it's not me...it's Linda...because it's more...relaxed.*

**Learner 21:** *I don't know but I think the...drama project makes us more comfortable to talk in front of people... I feel more comfortable when I'm reading a text or when I'm...uh...when we're playing a game... for example...with everybody...I think...uh...these activities are helping to feel more comfortable to talk out of the course with other people.*

**Learner 24:** *...the presentation...the drama project...we're going to present a scene of...uh...a bank...a bank that this bank was robbed... because I prepare what I'm going to say...I felt comfortable.*

These learners' accounts suggest that rehearsing the play helped them feel more relaxed in interacting with others. Learner 16 mainly attributed this feeling to the fact that she spoke the L2 while playing a character. It might also be that she did not fear negative evaluation from peers since her character was the one who delivered the L2 speech and not

her. Process-oriented drama activities such as games, were also contributing factors for increased comfort levels in using the L2 outside the classroom.

In contrast, two learners, who belonged to the same class and had the same teacher, pointed out one specific moment when a drama-based activity caused them to feel uncomfortable speaking English in class:

**Learner 18:** *...we were learning how to tell stories...to sleep...the intonation and the teacher asked for the voice to make the person...the character that was a girl so we have to make a strange voice...and the girls have to make characters that was a boy...I don't know...I felt a little embarrassed because the teacher say that we have to make a voice that was very strange.*

**Learner 20:** *I think one day that she...we have to uh...read a text but with a voice of the person so...I was an old woman and I had to say like an old woman... I'm shy...so it was a little embarrassing...most part because I'm shy...some people were like...looking at me like...it was a little strange.*

These respondents referred to an activity in which they practiced telling stories in role, that is, playing a character. Although the teacher possibly aimed to encourage learners to practice voice projection, tone, and pitch (as previously indicated as a positive factor for some learners), learners 18 and 20 had difficulty engaging in the activity.

### **Oral Presentations**

Another theme frequently identified during the interviews was delivering oral presentations. Some participants reported that oral presentations were not an anxiety inducing

factor, while others considered them to be. The following six learners indicated that giving oral presentations did not pose a threat to speak the L2:

**Learner 5:** *...today I have a presentation and it was very good...there is no problem to do this...it was about soccer...it was natural...it is easy for me.*

**Learner 7:** *...to make presentations is a little embarrassing but just a little...and not feel uncomfortable...because sometimes we...we...stutter...and it was a little embarrassing but just kidding...no one cares.*

**Learner 8:** *...in the presentation I presented...I studied very hard in...the last days...but no...only if I didn't study.*

**Learner 9:** *...it's easy because there is not an audience with one hundred people...I don't know...there are only five so for me it's ok...well...when you say anything wrong you always feel a little...uncomfortable but it's normal.*

**Learner 11:** *...when I have to make presentations...normally I...prepare myself...uh...before...but sometimes I can't do this...but...uh...but when I...first...at first I feel like...wow...I'm gonna...do mistakes...great...but then I present...and everything goes ok...there was uh...a presentation and I felt more comfortable...when I was...in the front of the class...that I had a paper in my hand so...it helps me to remember some words sometimes...but...uh...most of the...uh...situations I...don't use it.*

**Learner 22:** *...when it's about a subject that I like...and that I know...when I know what I'm saying and...for example music...about my routine...it's easier to speak about it...when it's...something I don't like...I don't like talking.*

The lack of FLSA when delivering oral presentations was attributed to specific factors: a small and familiar audience, topic familiarity, previous preparation, and having written notes.

Two learners indicated not feeling comfortable during oral presentations and explained their reasons:

**Learner 2:** *I think because I have...uh...difficult and...I think...uh...I think other...other peoples...knows more than me.*

**Learner 6:** *...sometimes making presentations...when I didn't know the word I need to speak...I was a little nervous...because uh...when I don't know what to say I get a little nervous because I'm...I'm...like...in front of the class...and all these things.*

The perception of having lower language levels compared to other learners in class was a source of FLSA. Lack of vocabulary and being the centre of attention were also indicated as contributing to FLSA levels.

### **Shyness**

Although the interview questions did not target personality traits, shyness was a recurrent theme during interviews. Two learners attributed their lack of comfort in speaking in front of the class to shyness; however, they did not explicitly link shyness to feeling threatened in using the L2:

**Learner 1:** *I felt embarrassed to speak in front of the class...I don't know...I'm afraid they doesn't like...not because of my English...but...because I'm shy.*

**Learner 4:** *...because I'm a little bit shy.... I'm shy to...to talk...in front of my class.*

This uncomfortable feeling occurred only when speaking in front of a class, that is, when delivering an oral presentation. These learners' embarrassment was not attributed to the use of the L2 in other less threatening contexts. Therefore, it could be that they would also be shy if required to deliver an oral presentation in their L1.

Four other learners also indicated being shy, but reported feeling comfortable speaking the L2:

**Learner 3:** *...because it's in front of everybody...I don't know...I feel comfortable but I'm a little bit shy.*

**Learner 10:** *... in presentations sometimes I get shy...but I didn't feel uncomfortable...just shy...because everyone's looking at you and...and this makes me get shy.*

**Learner 22:** *I don't like to present in front of...in front of the class...because I'm shy...and I don't feel comfortable....but with the students I don't feel uncomfortable.*

**Learner 23:** *In this course I don't remember to have these moments...sometimes I was embarrassed...but the biggest part...was ok...I don't remember exactly the parts...uh...I think I'm shy and sometimes I get embarrassed.*

For these learners, shyness is not a deterrent to speaking the L2. These accounts demonstrate that being shy is not necessarily an indicator of high FLSPA levels.

### **Teachers**

Although the interview questions sought to investigate moments that made learners feel more or less comfortable in using the L2 in the classroom and not people, the teacher was indicated as a positive contributing factor to lowering anxiety:



**Learner 1:** *I think the teacher...makes us feel very...comfortable...she's very...she gives us a lot of attention... I think the teacher helps a lot...she makes me feel confident.*

**Learner 2:** *When...when I was...speaking with the teacher...because she knows when I talk...to her...I...I think that...that I know English too.*

**Learner 4:** *...I fell really comfortable...with the teacher.*

**Learner 7:** *...because when we talk Portuguese the teacher say: "Oh stop...speak English" so I speak...I began to speak English.*

**Learner 20:** *...like I say...I feel comfortable...because the teacher was saying "oh you're doing a great job"...I don't know...I just feel like we're not...doing the wrong thing.*

**Learner 19:** *...because I had the same teacher since I was in Teens 2 so basically the whole course...I feel more comfortable...I feel comfortable uh...talking English...*

These six responses indicate the teacher contributed to lowering FLSA levels. Familiarity with the teacher and the teacher's positive encouragement motivated learners to speak the L2.

### **Relationship with Classmates**

Another contributing factor to lowering FLSA levels was learners' relationship with classmates:

**Learner 4:** *I feel comfortable when...we have to talk with...with a friend about exercise... in that situations.*

**Learner 6:** *...because normally I know what to say and...it's like...my friends so I don't feel uncomfortable.*

**Learner 18:** *...I feel comfortable because I'm used to the people of the class...we know...when I entered in the school...I studied with all of them...almost.*

**Learner 23:** *...I don't know...I think the same persons...helped to be comfortable.*

**Learner 19:** *...I think it's easier because this person maybe have the same English that you so...you don't need to worry.*

These five responses indicate that when learners have positive interactions with peers in the language classroom, this can lead to low levels of anxiety when speaking in the L2. The fact that they had known their peers for a long time and shared the same L2 level also contributed to their comfort levels in speaking English in class.

### **Learners' Attitudes Towards Learning English**

The last factor identified as potentially lowering FLSA levels was learners' attitudes towards L2 learning:

**Learner 1:** *...we can speak in English and I can give my opinion...I like that and I think it's good... I like to express myself.*

**Learner 4:** *...I always is the first volunteer. I don't worry...uh...about my English because I'm here to learn.*

**Learner 5:** *...I didn't have problems with that...I like English.*

**Learner 8:** *I like English...so I study and...I didn't have scared.*

**Learner 9:** *...even if I...if I get the wrong answer...I will be ok because I'm here to study.*

**Learner 17:** *... I like speaking English. I feel comfortable. I like...to improve my*

*English.*

These six accounts indicate very positive attitudes towards learning the L2 and contributed to lower FLSA levels because of: not worrying about volunteering answers in class, enjoying the experience of studying a foreign language, and not being afraid of making mistakes in English.

### **Summary of Results**

Given the exploratory nature of the study, the results are promising but inconclusive: drama-based classroom practices lead to improvements in oral fluency over time, but do not afford a unique advantage in terms of improvements in comprehensibility or accent. For these variables, both treatment and control groups improved over time. It is also suggested that these three dimensions of speech are therefore partially independent as one can improve more than others.

The results of the FLSA analysis suggest that drama-based instruction does not offer a clear advantage over traditional instruction when it comes to FLSA, at least not in the population examined in this study. No significant difference on FLSA scores was found between groups. The results suggest that learners are likely to experience lower or higher levels of FLSA depending on specific situations. In addition, no significant correlations between FLSA scores and fluency, comprehensibility, or accent were found.

Finally, quantitative results gathered from the semi-structured interviews confirm that learners in both groups experienced low levels of FLSA. A number of factors were reported as contributing to learners' comfort levels when speaking the L2: the drama-based program, oral presentation delivery, teachers, relationships with classmates, and learners' attitudes towards learning English.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS**

The goal of this research was to provide a better understanding of the effects of drama on L2 oral communication and anxiety, particularly on oral fluency, comprehensibility, accent, and FLSA. In this chapter, each research question will be discussed in light of the results of the study. Because the study is exploratory in nature and sample sizes were small, all results are tentative. After summarizing findings by research questions, a more detailed account of the study's limitations will be provided as well as avenues for further research.

### **Discussion on Research Question One**

The first research question asked whether learners in a drama-based program experience more gains in oral fluency compared to learners in a non-drama EFL program and if any resulting gains depend on the type of speaking task. The statistically significant results of this study suggest that drama-based instructional practices can facilitate improvement in learner's oral fluency over time. Because there was no significant difference in comprehensibility and accent levels over time between groups, there is evidence that the drama-based program did not affect these two dimensions. Furthermore, there did not appear to be a substantial difference among task types.

Although the results of this study seem to accord well with previous literature by suggesting that drama improves oral communication, it remains unclear which particular aspect of the drama approach led to these results. Given that this study investigated a drama-based program with elements of both process- and product-oriented activities, it is unknown whether fluency improvements resulted from one approach or the other. Kao (1994) and Stinson and Freebody (2006) suggest that significant improvement in oral communication

was due to process-oriented drama. It is possible that had the treatment of the current study focused only on process-oriented drama the results would have still been the same. Due to the fact that there has not yet been a study comparing the effects of product-oriented vs. process-oriented drama, it is unclear whether improvement in oral fluency in this study was the result of one of the two approaches or a combination of both.

The current study sought to improve upon previous methodologies and aimed to arrive at more reliable results. For example, Kao (1994) based the results of her study on the opinion of two raters, whereas Coleman (2005) used three raters. In this study, judgments of thirty raters were used to measure learners' speech samples. In addition, the result of the inter-rater reliability test suggests an acceptable level of agreement meaning that perceptions of oral fluency, comprehensibility, and accent were similar among raters. The results of this study, therefore, provide a more reliable rating method compared to previous studies.

The cultural differences between Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) and Brazilians must not be overlooked when comparing this study to those that have come before; one could hypothesize that the Taiwanese, Korean, and Singaporean learners in Kao's (1994), Coleman's (2005) and Stinson & Freebody's (2006) studies respectively, showed oral communication improvement after a drama-based program due to more exposure to oral practice compared to traditional programs. In fact, it is historically known that CHC educational practices often include classes that are teacher-centred and learners rarely have an active oral participation (Coleman, 2005). Conversely, although both groups of Brazilian learners in the current study (treatment and control) were exposed to learner-centred classes, the oral fluency levels of the treatment group improved the most, possibly as a result of the drama-based instruction. Thus, it appears that drama-based programs may positively affect

oral fluency among L2 learners from both CHC background and Brazilians, despite their differences. This suggests that drama-based education provides a promising approach for learners from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds as well.

Since learners in both treatment and control groups made significant gains in comprehensibility and accent levels over time, these improvements cannot be attributed to the drama-based instruction. In fact, it is unclear which specific factor(s) contributed to such gains. It could be that the laboratory program, an integral pedagogical component in both drama-based and non-drama-based programs, influenced these results: extensive practice on segmental and suprasegmental elements of phonology could have affected comprehensibility and accent scores. Simple exposure to L2 practice between T1 and T2 may have possibly led to these improvements.

The investigation on task types in this study is novel in the sense that it examines data from two distinct pedagogical practices. Learners in both groups performed five different tasks at T1 and T2: a first person picture narration, a third person picture narration, a video retelling, a role-play, and a monologue about a familiar topic. The types of speaking tasks used in this study were not the same as used in previous literature. For example, Skehan and Foster (1999) compared oral fluency levels among learners from various L1 backgrounds across four different conditions of a video narration task. No other tasks were under study in their research. Derwing et al. (2004) found that ratings of Mandarin speakers of English on the third person picture description task were significantly lower than ratings on either the monologue or the conversation. Foster and Skehan (1996) found that a picture narrative task contained more silence and pauses than the personal information exchange task or a collaborative decision-making task. In the current study, the tasks are not exactly comparable

to the tasks used in Foster and Skehan's. It is possible that if the same tasks used in Foster and Skehan had been used in this study, results across tasks may have been found. However, it could also be that a significant task effect was not found because of the small sample size, or that Brazilian speakers of English are perceived as more fluent than learners from other cultural backgrounds.

Finally, the results of the current study suggest that listeners' perceptions of fluency are related to comprehensibility judgments as opposed to their assessments of accentedness. For example, learners' speech in both groups was considered highly accented, whereas comprehensibility and fluency scores were relatively similar. These results accord well with Derwing et al.'s (2004) finding that heavily accented speech is very often judged as easy to understand. Similarly, in this study, ratings suggest that although accented, learners' speech was fluent and easy to understand. It is important to note that although the learners' in Derwing et al.'s (2004) study and in the current study came from different linguistic backgrounds, Mandarin and Portuguese respectively, their fluency and comprehensibility ratings were similarly related. In addition, considering they had different L2 levels - the Mandarin speakers had basic skills, whereas the Portuguese speakers had intermediate skills - an investigation among learners from other linguistic backgrounds may lead to similar results. It appears that improved fluency is less likely to lead to a perception of reduced accentedness. Accent ratings are based more heavily on linguistic features such as segmental and suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation, which may have a smaller impact on the perception of fluency.

### **Discussion on Research Question Two**

The second research question asked whether learners in a drama-based program experience lowers levels of FLSA compared to learners in the non-drama EFL program. The importance of this question rests in how it investigates anxiety. Previous research on drama has not addressed FLSA. In fact, it is unclear how the concept of anxiety has been addressed previously. By narrowing the investigation from the broader definition of anxiety to FLSA, and in particular, to how it is reflected in a drama-based EFL program, this research sought to clarify its focus. In addition, a reliable instrument that has been widely used to investigate FLSA levels was used. Finally, a control group was used to arrive at more interpretable findings.

The quantitative analysis from the repeated measures ANOVA test indicates that learners in both treatment and control groups experienced significant improvements in FLSA levels over time. These learners perceived themselves as less anxious at the end of their EFL program. No significant difference was found between groups. These quantitative results do not confirm what previous literature suggests: that drama reduces levels of anxiety. However, it is important to note that previous studies investigated “overall anxiety” rather than focusing on FLSA only. It could be that trait, state or both types of anxiety are reduced due to drama-based instruction.

The instrumentation used in previous studies to measure anxiety did not follow conventions of recent research into language anxiety, posing an important limitation. For example, Kao (1994) used learners’ journal entries to analyze anxiety levels, Coleman (2005) used learners’ questionnaires, and Piazzoli (2011) carried out interviews with learners. Had



the same instrument been used in the current and in previous studies, possibly no significant results would have been found.

Furthermore, the populations examined in previous studies are not necessarily commensurate with those in this study. Anxiety levels might be more often manifested among learners from particular cultures or age groups. For example, the Brazilian language learners might have manifested lower levels of FLSA compared to learners in Kao's (1994) and Coleman's (2005) studies, who belong to a CHC background. Age could be another determining factor for low anxiety levels: the learners investigated by Piazzoli (2011) and Kao (1994) were university students, whereas the learners in Coleman's (2005) study were adolescents. The learners in the current study were between 12 and 16 years of age; therefore, FLSA may not be significantly reflected because they were young language learners. It could also be that learners in this study did not show higher FLSA levels due to the small number of learners per class (5 to 8), or because of the friendly relationship among them.

Finally, learners in both groups indicated that they are likely to feel more or less anxious depending on given situations. For example, low FLSA scores were given to speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation from peers or teachers, whereas higher scores were given to situations in which learners had to speak with native speakers and when accuracy came into play.

### **Discussion on Research Question Three**

The third research question asked how FLSA and oral fluency are interrelated. The findings suggest that FLSA may not be correlated with fluency, comprehensibility, or accent scores for this population. Learners in both treatment and control groups did not experience high levels of FLSA, which could have influenced the results. In addition, because the

relationship between FLSA and oral fluency had not yet been investigated by previous research, comparison with other studies is not possible.

The FLSA and fluency scores in this study were not positively correlated; thus, the assertion that oral fluency, comprehensibility, and accent scores are improved when learners experience low levels of FLSA cannot be made. If the learners in the experimental group, who made significant gains in oral fluency over time, had experienced high levels of FLSA at the commencement of the program and low levels at the end of it, a correlation between fluency and FLSA might have been found.

#### **Discussion on Research Question Four**

The fourth research question asked about the moments in the EFL classroom that either reduced or increased anxiety levels during speaking tasks. Six factors were often mentioned in the interviews: the drama-based program, oral presentation delivery, shyness, teachers, relationships with classmates, and learners' attitudes towards learning English.

The drama-based program was the most cited theme among learners in the treatment group. The comments suggest that these learners felt more comfortable speaking the L2 during drama-based practices. Piazzoli (2011) suggests that learners feel less anxious to speak the L2 when in role. Similarly, one learner in the current study indicated being “...*more comfortable...speaking English because it's not me...it's Linda*”. Other learners commented that the drama-based program enabled them to be less shy speaking the L2. The drama-based program in this study provided opportunities for learners to develop oral communication skills in a foreign language in a relaxed environment, leading to improvements in fluency. Likewise, participants in Coleman's (2005) study perceived drama as a tool to manage anxiety and apprehension, making them feel more relaxed while speaking English. Coleman's

learners indicated that play presentation and play rehearsal were the most helpful activities. The learners in the current study did not necessarily make a distinction between process- and product-oriented drama activities since they were intertwined. Two learners in the treatment group mentioned one specific activity in the classroom that made them feel uncomfortable - reading lines from a story using “different” voices. It could be that these learners experienced higher levels of FLSA only in this particular activity. Overall, given that the drama-based program was frequently suggested as a contributor for how comfortable learners felt when speaking the L2, this may confirm the positive effects of drama on FLSA. Yet, had learners in the control group experienced significant higher levels of FLSA at T2 compared to learners in the treatment group, this suggestion could have been made more assertively.

Another reported factor was oral presentation delivery. Five learners suggested that giving oral presentations in front of the class did not cause anxiety to speak the L2. Given that these learners participated in small classrooms with only five to eight students, had they been required to make oral presentations in front of a larger audience, they might have experienced higher levels of FLSA. Only two participants reported feeling uncomfortable when giving oral presentations: one learner experienced fear of negative evaluation and another learner felt that being in front of an audience was a source of anxiety. It is possible that learners would have experienced the same feeling if required to make an oral presentation in their L1.

The third contributing factor was related to a personality trait. Shyness was reported by six learners who indicated feeling somewhat uncomfortable using the L2. This is an interesting observation, but not surprising. These learners may also be shy when speaking in the L1, or in situations other than the language classroom. These learners might experience

state anxiety, as opposed to FLSA (situation-specific anxiety). In fact, no indication was given that shyness prevented these learners from speaking the L2.

The teacher was the fourth contributing factor for comfort levels when speaking the L2. Eight learners in both treatment and control groups reported that their teacher conducted the classes in a positive manner, enabling them to feel comfortable in using the L2. It is likely that teachers did not provide negative evaluations, which could have possibly caused anxiety.

The fifth factor that positively contributed to comfort levels in the classroom is related to learners' relationships with their peers. Five learners reported having good relationships with their classmates, which made them comfortable in using the L2. It is possible that these learners participated in an environment that was particularly conducive to language learning. Had they been in a different classroom environment, higher FLSA levels may have been experienced.

The last factor that was frequently reported in the interviews was the learners' attitudes towards learning English. Six learners reported having good attitudes, such as not worrying about making mistakes, being willing to express their viewpoints with others, and being willing to improve their language levels. No negative feelings towards their learning were reported.

### **Limitations of the Findings**

Stinson and Winston (2011) pointed out that although previous literature on the effects of drama on L2 learning has revealed positive findings, it also has several methodological limitations, thus weakening the generalizability of results. The current study aimed at improving upon previous methodologies by including more reliable instruments in the investigation. However, like any exploratory research, it also has several limitations.

One of the limitations of the current study includes the research design. Although significant results were found, the sample sizes used to compare treatment and control groups were relatively small. For a more accurate measurement of the effects of drama on oral fluency and FLSA, a larger study with more L2 participants is needed to confirm the results found here. Variables in this study were controlled to an extent: the learners belonged to the same language and socio-geographical backgrounds; age was controlled (12 - 16); and learners were divided into treatment and control groups (although not randomly selected or assigned to these groups). Gender was not a factor of interest for this study; therefore, there was no investigation related to differences between males or females. The research design also included teachers who were part of the teaching staff and were not randomly assigned to treatment or control groups.

The selection of teachers and pedagogical practices could also have influenced the results of the study. The drama-based EFL program is part of the school curriculum and not allowing the teachers in the control group to use the drama activities was a potentially disruptive element. Although the two teachers in the control group reported having previously taught the oral presentation project, which was used in place of the drama-based activities, they could have delivered the EFL program in a less structured manner. The suggestion of substituting the drama-based practice for an oral presentation project came from these teachers themselves; yet, it is not known whether they were as motivated or prepared as the two teachers in the treatment group.

Types of speaking tasks posed another limitation to the results of this study. Five different tasks in a formal interview setting were used. It could be that had other tasks or different situations been used, different results would have been found. Had the learners in

the treatment group been required to perform other tasks, such as a simple conversation with a native speaker in an authentic situation, no significant gains in oral fluency would have been found.

Another limitation includes the learning environment. Both FLSA and oral fluency measurements relate to in-class experiences and the current study's results are limited to this particular environment. As well, learners' speech samples were audio-recorded during pre- and post-tests, and oral fluency results are limited to this specific situation. Therefore, the findings cannot be transferred to out-of-class environments or informal situations.

Results gathered from the FLSA questionnaires were pooled and analyses were carried out on the mean data for each item, which means that individual differences were not taken into account. Therefore, the analyses pose an important limitation: FLSA could have been manifested among some individual learners. In addition, this research was conducted in one specific regional EFL setting and involved intact groups of learners with very limited control of variables, posing limitations to the results.

Given that the operationalization of the term "fluency" is complex, its interpretation has implications regarding the findings of the current study. For example, the definition of oral fluency given to the raters who provided their judgments on the speech samples was: "How smooth the speaker's oral delivery is based on his/her use of pauses, hesitation markers, fillers (e.g., um, uh), etc." If another definition for fluency had been provided, results may have been different. In addition, fluency was judged by untrained raters who did not have phonological training; therefore, findings could have been different if trained raters had been recruited. The fact that the raters were all born and raised in Canada could also lead to sensitivity to other linguistic variations of English. Canada is known as

having a multicultural population, with several L2 speakers who have distinct accented speech: therefore, it is possible that these raters provided generous ratings for the speech samples.

The semi-structured interviews also posed several limitations. Examples of moments in the classroom that could have made learners feel more or less comfortable to speak the L2 were provided. This provision could have influenced learners to talk about these particular moments and not others. Additionally, as previously noted, the transcriptions of the recording are coded in a subjective manner, which could have impacted their interpretation. Also, I chose to pool the transcriptions across six factors I perceived as most often reported. Another researcher may have pooled these accounts differently, possibly leading to a slightly different interpretation and conclusions.

Finally, inherent in the design of this study is a limitation in its replicability. The treatment variables included spontaneous oral productions. Thus, across learners and across groups, despite sharing a similar curriculum framework, the precise content of the communicative activities will always differ across learners. While replicating the study with similar conditions may lead to a confirmation of these results, it should be conceded that not all learners will necessarily benefit to the same extent, since they are in essence, involved in determining the content of their own treatment.

In summary, although this study has several limitations, it is important to note that they are not unexpected. Given that preliminary ideas are explored, this study aims to define problems and suggest hypotheses. While more research is needed to validate the findings of this study, it makes a very strong contribution to the literature both by revealing new findings and in raising further questions. Similar research in the future might include more participants

from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and different teaching practices to determine the generalizability of the results found here. An investigation between process- and product-drama instructions would also lead to further insight into language anxiety and L2 oral fluency. In addition, it would be interesting if the methodology of this research could be replicated on a larger scale in order to validate its findings. The knowledge gained from such studies will improve language learning experiences by exposing learners to more effective classroom practices, more comfortable learning environments, and increased opportunities for enhancing oral fluency.



## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Language learners around the world strive to achieve oral fluency in a second or foreign language. They often feel uncomfortable and even anxious during oral presentations and speaking tasks, which may limit fluency development. Owing to the fact that anxiety can be a debilitating factor when learners are asked to perform orally, the need to provide them with opportunities to confront these fears in a safe environment, as opposed to only adopting a protectionist approach, is of crucial importance. Pedagogical practices that enable learners to achieve oral fluency are often neglected (Wood, 2004; Rossiter et al., 2010). Thus, the results of this exploratory research shed light on how the particular drama approach used in this study can positively impact learners' oral fluency.

This study confirms and extends our knowledge of the impact of drama-based approaches on L2 oral communication. Previous literature has suggested that drama improves learners' oral communication skills (Stern, 1980; Kao, 1994; Bang, 2003; Coleman, 2005; Stinson & Freebody, 2006), and the results of this study suggest benefits of one drama program on oral fluency. The inclusion of fluency, comprehensibility, and accent ratings introduced in this study provides a useful reliable instrument to investigate a larger number of dimensions of oral communication than have been examined in the past. Still, it is unclear whether fluency gains found in this study are correlated to temporal or non-temporal measures. Moreover, it is not known whether these gains were a result of the process- or product-oriented drama activities. Further research comparing how each approach may affect fluency, comprehensibility, accent or other dimensions (e.g. accuracy, intonation, pronunciation, and confidence) independently is needed.

This study introduced an investigation of whether a particular dimension of anxiety is affected by a drama-based EFL program and provides further insights into the impact of drama in L2 learning. Although previous studies suggest that the use of drama-based activities positively impacts “overall anxiety” (Kao, 1994; Coleman, 2005; Piazzoli, 2011), the results of this study do not suggest that FLSA is affected by drama. Limitations with the FLSA instrument used do not allow any conclusion about the effect of the drama-based program used in this study on FLSA. Further investigation is needed to make valid assertions that drama reduces language learners’ anxiety. Future studies could include the same or other reliable instruments to test FLSA to distinguish between trait and state anxiety, for example.

The findings of this study expand the scope of previous research on drama and L2 learning by considering learners’ own observations regarding whether particular classroom practices impact FLSA levels. Qualitative analyses explore the potential of drama practices on learners’ comfort levels in speaking in the L2, although much more research is needed to confirm that this is the case.

Drama in L2 learning seems to have a positive impact on learners’ oral communication; thus, it is important that drama is not overlooked as a pedagogical practice. If oral fluency occurs when one has greater control over the aesthetic functions of language, which include creativity, joking, and creating metaphors (Fillmore, 1979), traditional pedagogical practices appear to do a disservice by preventing language learners from developing these skills. Engaging learners in improvised and problem-solving situations in the L2 classroom, in which creativity with the language can occur, is often absent. Drama-based practices can be seen as an invaluable approach to the development of oral fluency.

Finally, from a pedagogical perspective, a practical achievement of this study is that it provides language instructors and researchers with a basic understanding of the effects of drama on particular dimensions of oral communication. It is hoped that the potential of drama to enhance fluency instruction in L2 learning is recognized and further explored.

### **Integrating Drama Practices into L2 Learning: Basic Guidelines**

This thesis has examined how drama-based instruction has the potential to enhance the L2 learning environment, especially oral communication skills. The study has introduced the impact of one particular drama-based approach on oral fluency. Given that drama-based instruction is wide-ranging, one may wonder how or to what extent drama can be incorporated into the L2 classroom. This section provides a brief sample of how drama can be used in different L2 contexts, and provides teachers with some basic guiding principles. The suggestions outlined should not be seen as the only or the best practice. Rather, they are simply samples of my own teaching practice in L2 classrooms.

#### **Scenes with Academic Words**

Many colleges and universities offer English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs to L2 learners who wish to pursue undergraduate and graduate studies. Knowledge of academic words is often a required outcome in course outlines, and exploring them through a drama-based activity may be appealing. The activity described below is suggested for adult learners who have intermediate/advanced levels of English proficiency and who may or may not share the same L1.

### Academic Words in a Scene (process- and product-oriented drama)

Goals: express difference of opinion, approval, disapproval, indifference, criticism, intention; practice on improvisational skills, body language, prosodic features, critical thinking, prior knowledge of linguistic items, academic words, and conflict resolution.

Instruction: Learners work in groups of four. Each group receives four previously taught academic words and four roles to play. For example:

<b>a police officer</b>	<b>an elderly lady</b>	<b>a young boy</b>	<b>a reporter</b>
<i>abandon</i>	<i>currency</i>	<i>tension</i>	<i>random</i>

The teacher invites learners to prepare a scene with a conflict, although the conflict is not provided. Learners are allowed time (five to ten minutes) to prepare and choose the characters, create the story line and a conflict. The scene does not have to be scripted. At this point, learners are expected to use prior knowledge of the L2, express their opinions as well as make decisions as a group. It is expected that the academic words received be used in the role-play. Learners may present a semi-improvised role-play in front of the class and learners who watch can be asked to identify the academic words used. This activity may be adapted and the introduction of other characters and/or academic words can be used. Also, adding an element of humour can be helpful, especially for learners who are shy or quiet.

### **Role-Play with Idioms**

Idioms are often part of the teaching curricula in many EFL/ESL programs. Knowing how to apply idioms in social interactions is often a challenge, especially for learners with low English proficiency level. Providing these learners with a scripted product-oriented dramatic role-play may enhance their awareness of idioms in social context. The activity

below is designed for young learners with low or pre-intermediate English proficiency level who share the same or different linguistic backgrounds.

Gibberish Role-Play (product-oriented drama)

Goals: practice with verbal and non-verbal behaviours, improvisational skills, prosodic features, new knowledge of specific linguistic items (e.g., idioms).

Instruction: Learners work in pairs. Each pair receives one card with a scripted role-play. For example:

**Two students at school. Their project is due in an hour, but they haven't started it yet. Student A is tired of always doing all the work. Student B needs an A on the project to pass the course.**

Student B: What's up? Are you going to help me with this or what?

Student A: Are you kidding me?

Student B: It's due in an hour and I need an A or I'll fail the course.

Student A: It's about time you did some work.

**A teenage son/daughter arrives home late for dinner. When he/she walks in, his/her parents are sitting on the couch talking.**

Teenage son/daughter: Hey, what's going on? I'm starving!

Parent: Really? How come you're late for dinner?

Teenage son/daughter: I was playing video game at my friend's.

Parent: Why don't you go to the kitchen and get yourself a bit to eat?

**Two teenage siblings. Sibling 1 drops sibling 2's into the dish water. Now the phone is not working.**

Sibling 2: Have you seen my phone?

Sibling 1: Phone? What phone is that?

Sibling 2 (*notices the phone in the dish water*): Why did you do that? Are you out of your mind?

Sibling 1: Sorry, I'll make it up to you. I promise.

The teacher asks learners to read the role-play in pairs. First, learners are required to use gibberish language to convey the meaning of the sentences in the dialogue. Some minutes for

learners to prepare is allowed. They are invited to present their role-play to other learners in class. At this time, learners are encouraged to use as many non-verbal cues as possible and make use of prosodic features such as intonation, pitch, stress and rhythm. The goal is that the learners who watch the role-play figure out what it is about. Later, the role-play is presented once again, but this time learners speak English and the ones watching confirm their guesses. As a follow-up, the teacher may call learners' attention to the idioms used, and may invite learners to practice them in other situational contexts. The teacher may also encourage learners to create their own role-play and use the idioms provided in the card, leading to a process-oriented drama practice.

### **Open-ended Scenarios**

Occupation-specific Language Training (OSLT) or Business English programs often require adult learners to speak the L2 in work related situations. An alternative way to explore the work place culture and the essential linguistic skills needed in this environment is through engaging learners in open-ended scenarios. The activity described below is suggested for adult learners, particularly for immigrants to a new country, who have high intermediate/advanced English proficiency levels and different L1.

#### Cultural Awareness in the Workplace (process-oriented drama)

Goals: apply complex and appropriate lexical items related to professional situations; practice complex grammatical patterns, and linguistic appropriateness to meet social and professional demands (cultural awareness).

Instruction: The teacher asks learners about issues or challenges they may experience in the L2 work place. Some suggestions may be written on the board (e.g., language, culture, behaviour, manners, food, customs, attire, among others). Students work in groups of three or

four. First, they are invited to discuss some issues. Later, learners choose the most challenging issue discussed and prepare a scene where conflict resolution will take place. If learners are unable to think of a situation, the teacher may provide some possibilities based on the cultural context of the country/city. For example:

Two coworkers and the manager of the company are in a meeting. One coworker is wearing strong cologne/perfume, which makes other people in the room have an allergic reaction. In a Canadian workplace, most companies have a scent-free policy.

After learners have discussed possible solutions, they may present the scene to other learners in class. As a follow-up, teachers and learners might want to engage in a concluding discussion suggesting possible ways to address the issues raised.

Note: This activity requires both teachers and learners to be culturally sensitive. Discussions should be carried out in a positive and welcoming manner. It is also important that the teacher has cultural awareness of both the workplace environment and learners' backgrounds.

### **Language Games**

In EFL contexts, many schools offer L2 courses for young learners. Applying drama games can offer these learners an opportunity to actively engage in L2 learning while having fun. Yet, learners at a beginning level of L2 proficiency might find it difficult to speak the L2. Language games, with specific linguistic items to be practiced, invite learners to use the L2 in a non-threatening way. The activity described below is intended for young learners with low English proficiency level and who may or may not share the same L1.

### Pantomime (process- and product-oriented drama)

Goals: practice specific linguistic items (present continuous tense), grammatical accuracy, use of body language, decision-making, and improvisational skills.

Instruction: Learners work in groups of four. One group of four will play the game against another group (Group A X Group B). One learner from each group is chosen and a card containing an action is given. For example:

You are riding a bicycle	You are watching TV
You are playing a video game	You are doing your homework

The chosen learner will pantomime the action contained in the card to their groups (no words are allowed). The group that guesses the action first scores a point. Grammatical accuracy is a requirement for a point to be awarded. As a follow-up, learners can be given blank cards, where they will write actions for learners in the other group to pantomime.

Note: In this particular activity, learners are required to use the present continuous form.

Also, some learners may feel resistant to pantomime the actions. If this is the case, they can still participate by guessing the actions (but not pantomiming). It is also important that the teacher supervise learners while writing the actions (some actions could be difficult to pantomime or inappropriate).

### **Final Considerations**

The implementation of drama-based activities in L2 learning can offer extensive oral communicative practices. Yet, given the complex and diverse nature of drama, its application can be challenging. Although the previous section offers samples of how drama can be used



in the L2 classroom, teachers who wish to experiment with drama might want to carefully analyze their L2 learners' needs and address some limitations.

One implication of drama in L2 contexts includes learners' willingness to participate in these activities. It could be that some learners are more resistant than others, or expect the teacher (and not the learner) to be more active in class. Some reasons for the lack of participation might include shyness, fear of negative evaluation, among others. A possible solution to address this problem could be the introduction of controlled drama practices (e.g., scripted role-plays) and inviting learners to engage in small group activities, as opposed to presenting a scene in front of a class.

English proficiency levels require careful analysis prior to implementing drama practices. Process-oriented activities, involving open-ended scenarios or unscripted role-plays, are often more efficient with learners who have intermediate/advanced proficiency levels. It can be frustrating for learners with limited linguistic background to engage in process drama. Product-oriented drama may be an alternative for learners with low proficiency levels. In fact, practicing given linguistic items may offer these learners more opportunities for L2 acquisition. Yet, it is important that scripted language is not seen as merely words recited or memorized; prosodic features such as intonation and rhythm should not be overlooked.

One final consideration includes the learning environment: EFL and ESL contexts, diverse language and cultural backgrounds, learners' ages, number of learners per class, and the school's infrastructure might pose difficult challenges to be addressed. For example, applying process drama with young EFL learners who have low English proficient levels in a large class could be disruptive. These learners might make use of the L1 only, and divert their

attention from learning the L2. In an ESL context, diverse cultural backgrounds could be a problem if learners have different beliefs and values regarding a particular issue.

There is little doubt that drama offers oral communicative practices in L2 learning. Teachers and learners might be motivated to experiment with different approaches to drama; however, the success of drama activities does not rely solely on the teacher's efforts, and the use of drama does not always guarantee success. There is the need for careful and sensitive analysis of the learning environment. The issues discussed in this section are intended to help teachers anticipate potential problems, but not to discourage the use of drama. Instead, it is hoped that teachers are aware of the challenges of implementing drama, but still feel motivated by the positive impact it can have on L2 learning.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A – Sample of Language Laboratory Activities

**Activity 1:** In your class you learned adjectives to describe people's personality.

A. Listen and repeat.

<i>Honest</i>	<i>Rude</i>	<i>Loyal</i>	<i>Shy</i>	<i>Easy-going</i>
<i>Generous</i>	<i>Unfriendly</i>	<i>Cruel</i>	<i>Intelligent</i>	<i>Funny</i>
<i>Friendly</i>	<i>Adventurous</i>	<i>Courageous</i>	<i>Enthusiastic</i>	<i>Quiet</i>

**Activity 2:** Notice the pronunciation of the suffix –ous in some adjectives. Listen:

*Generous*      *Adventurous*      *Courageous*

In Portuguese pronunciation, we would pronounce this suffix as “ous”, but in English we pronounce it as /əs/. Listen to these adjectives and repeat. Pay attention to the final /əs/.

<i>Famous</i>	<i>Generous</i>	<i>Courageous</i>	<i>Adventurous</i>	<i>Fabulous</i>
<i>Generous</i>	<i>Jealous</i>	<i>Ridiculous</i>	<i>Ambitious</i>	<i>Gorgeous</i>

Now listen to people describing their friends and say the corresponding adjective.

Example:

A: *My friend Sarah says I am her best friend. Well, I think she's my best friend too, but she doesn't like it when I talk to other friends at school. I am her only friend and she says that if we are best friends, we should be inseparable.*

You: *She's jealous.*

C. Now you do it. Listen and respond. You will play the YOU part.

**Activity 3:** Paul is talking about his best friend.

A. Listen.

Paul: *My best friend's name is Leo. He's really adventurous. He's always telling me stories about things he does, like bungee-jumping and things like that. I think he's awesome!*

B. Now listen to Paul once again. This time, read the text along with the recording. Ready? Begin.

C. Now you do it. Talk about your best friend. Remember to use one or more adjectives you learned today.

## Appendix B - Sample of Process- and Product-oriented Drama Activities

### Process-oriented Drama Activity

#### Problem-solving Scenario

Goal: practice on improvisational skills, body language, prior knowledge of linguistic items, prosodic features, critical thinking, conflict resolution.

Instruction: Students work in groups of three. The teacher hands in a card with a situation:

**Characters: *Mother, Father, Son/Daughter***

*It is Sunday afternoon and you allowed your son/daughter to go to the movies with some friends. He/She was supposed to be back home by 8 pm. It is now 10:00 pm. You are worried because your son/daughter does not answer your calls and you have no idea what happened. You start thinking of calling the police to ask for help when your son/daughter walks in the room as if nothing had happened. He/She says "Hey, what's up?" and starts going to his/her room when you invite him/her for a talk.*

The teacher may write guiding questions on the board:

*Which character are you going to play? / Why are the parents worried? / Why didn't the son/daughter arrive home by 8 pm? / What is going to happen next? / How are the characters going to resolve the conflict?*

Students are allowed a few minutes to discuss the situation before presenting their scene to the class. Students are encouraged to use props, body language, improvised language, and prosodic features (stress, intonation, rhythm, pitch, loudness) to convey their emotions.

## Product-oriented Drama Activity

### Scripted Role-Play: Giving advice

Goals: practice on language to give advice, grammatical accuracy, authentic language, prosodic features, and use of body language.

Instruction: The teacher asks students some warm-up questions: *When a friend is telling you a problem he/she has do you think you are a good listener? / Are you good at giving your friends advice?*

The teacher elicits some expressions to give advice and may write them on the board:

***Have you tried \_\_\_\_\_ (verb+ing)?***

***Why don't you \_\_\_\_\_?***

***If I were in your shoes, I would \_\_\_\_\_?***

***In a case like this, you might want to \_\_\_\_\_?***

***Maybe you should \_\_\_\_\_.***

The teacher pairs students up and hands out a card:

<i>I'm being bullied at school.</i>	<i>I got a D on my Math test.</i>
<i>I heard my best friend talking behind my back.</i>	<i>My sister is mad at me and I don't know why.</i>

Students are encouraged to write a short dialogue using the sentence in the card and an expression to give advice. Students are allowed a few minutes to write down their dialogues.

The teacher monitors students and ensures their dialogue is grammatically accurate and appropriate. Later, students are encouraged to present their dialogue to the class.

### Appendix C – Sample of an Excerpt of an Adapted Play

**Narrator:** Well, this was our first Golden Ticket finder – Augustus Gloop. Let's see if the lucky girl who found the second Golden Ticket is here. Violet... Violet Beauregarde?

*(Violet Beauregarde and Mrs. Beauregarde enter. Violet is chewing gum ferociously and waving her arms excitedly. She is talking in a rapid, loud manner)*

**Violet:** I'm a gum chewer, mostly. But when I heard about this Wonka thing, I laid off the gum and switched to chocolate bars.

**Mrs. Beauregarde:** She's just a driven young woman. I don't know where she gets it.

**Violet** *(showing a trophy)*: I'm the Junior World Champion Gum Chewer. This piece of gum I'm chewing right at this moment, I've been working on for three months solid. That's a record.

**Mrs. Beauregarde** *(showing a baton)*: Of course I did have my share of trophies, mostly baton.

**Violet:** They say one kid is going to get the special prize. I don't care about the other four. That kid is going to be me.

**Mrs. Beauregarde:** Tell them why, Violet.

**Violet:** Because I'm a winner. *(Violet and Mrs. Beauregarde leave)*

**Narrator:** And that was Violet, everyone. Isn't she...*(ironically)* lovely? The third Golden Ticket was found by another lucky girl. Her name is Veruca Salt. Is Veruca here now?



## **Appendix D – Sample of an Oral Activity in the Non-drama EFL Program**

### Discussion: Oral Presentation (Theme: Sports)

Goal: practice on oral communicative skills, prior knowledge of linguistic items, and improvised language.

Instruction: Students work in groups of three. The teacher asks them what their favourite sport is. Later, the teacher writes some guiding questions on the board:

*What is your favourite sport? What do you like about it?*

*Do you ever play this sport? Why/Why not?*

*Do you like watching this sport on TV? Why/Why not?*

*Who is your favourite player? Why?*

Students are encouraged to discuss the topic in groups. Later, each one in the group will share their ideas with the whole class by delivering an improvised monologue.

As a follow-up, the teacher assigns a research project that students will develop: they will research further information about the sport chosen. Then, students are required to write a five-minute oral speech about the topic. The teacher will read the presentation and check grammatical and lexical accuracy. Students are asked to prepare their oral presentation by studying their script. Students are not required to memorize each line. Rather, they are encouraged to know the topic and improvise their speech delivery. Students are also encouraged to design posters with pictures and images to illustrate the topic.

## Appendix E - Research Ethics Board Approval Form



### Certificate of Ethics Clearance for Human Participant Research

DATE: July 27, 2010  
 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: THOMSON, Ron - Applied Linguistics  
 FILE: 10-003 - THOMSON  
 TYPE: Masters Thesis/Project STUDENT: Angeilica Galante  
 SUPERVISOR: Ron Thomson  
 TITLE: An exploratory study into foreign language anxiety and oral fluency: putting a drama-based EFL approach to the test

#### ETHICS CLEARANCE GRANTED

Type of Clearance: NEW

Expiry Date: 7/31/2011

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above named research proposal and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University's ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement. Clearance granted from 7/27/2010 to 7/31/2011.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored by, at a minimum, an annual report. Should your project extend beyond the expiry date, you are required to submit a Renewal form before 7/31/2011. Continued clearance is contingent on timely submission of reports.

To comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, you must also submit a final report upon completion of your project. All report forms can be found on the Research Ethics web page.

In addition, throughout your research, you must report promptly to the REB:

- a) Changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
- b) All adverse and/or unanticipated experiences or events that may have real or potential unfavourable implications for participants;
- c) New information that may adversely affect the safety of the participants or the conduct of the study;
- d) Any changes in your source of funding or new funding to a previously unfunded project.

We wish you success with your research.

Approved:

Michelle McGinn, Chair  
Research Ethics Board (REB)

**Note:** Brock University is accountable for the research carried out in its own jurisdiction or under its auspices and may refuse certain research even though the REB has found it ethically acceptable.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of research at that site.

## Appendix F - Rater Recruitment Poster

Department of Applied Linguistics  
Brock University

# Research Participants Wanted

The purpose of this study is to investigate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) spoken fluency. As a participant you will be asked to:

- fill out a language questionnaire on your language background
- listen to EFL learners' speech recordings and comment on factors that you feel contribute most to spoken fluency

**To participate in this study, it is required that:**

- You were born and raised in Canada
- Your first language is English
- You have normal hearing
- You are currently a student at Brock University (undergraduate or graduate)

### Participation

- Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and will not affect your grades or the evaluation of your work in any way
- It should take approximately 4 hours of your time (two meetings of 2 hours each)
- The meetings will take place at the Brock University library
- \$40 will be offered upon completion

If you wish to participate, contact:

**Angelica Galante, MA student**

**Applied Linguistics**

**Brock University**

**ag09eq@brocku.ca**

**Dr. Ron Thomson, Professor**

**Applied Linguistics**

**Brock University**

**ron.thomson@brocku.ca**

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (file #10-003). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

**Appendix G – Native Speaker Language Background Questionnaire****Participant # \_\_\_\_\_**

1. Sex:    ☐ male      ☐ female
  
2. What is your native language (mother tongue)?
  
3. How old are you?
  
4. Where were you born (Province, Country)?
  
5. What city do you currently live in and for how long? What other Canadian cities have you lived in and for how long?
  
6. Have you ever lived in a non-English speaking country? If yes, which one(s)?
  
7. Have you studied any languages other than English? Which one(s)?
  
8. Are there other languages besides English that you speak fluently?
  
9. Do you have normal hearing?

## Appendix H – Learners' Demographic Questionnaire

*The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather some information about your background as a language learner. Please answer the questions **as completely as you can**.*

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

4. How long have you been studying English?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you ever spent time in an English speaking country? If so, where and how long?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you speak English outside school? If so, explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you ever taken a drama/theatre course in English or in Portuguese? If so, where and how long?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Have you ever participated in a theatre play in English or in Portuguese? If so, explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your participation**

## Appendix I – Modified Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

**1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class.**

*(Eu nunca me sinto seguro quando eu falo na aula de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**2. I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.**

*(Eu não me preocupo quando faço erros durante as aulas de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.**

*(Eu tremo quando sei que vou ser chamado pra participar durante a aula de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.**

*(Eu fico apavorado quando eu não entendo o que o professor está falando em inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**5. I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.**

*(Eu vivo pensando que os outros alunos são melhores em inglês do que eu)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**6. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in class.**

*(Eu começo a entrar em pânico quando eu tenho que falar em aula sem preparação)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**7. In English class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.***(Durante as aulas de inglês, eu fico tão apreensivo que eu esqueço coisas que eu sei)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***8. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.***(Eu fico envergonhado em ser voluntário para dar respostas durante as aulas de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***9. I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.***(Eu não ficaria apreensivo em falar com pessoas nativas da língua inglesa)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***10. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.***(Eu fico chateado quando eu não entendo o que o professor está corrigindo)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***11. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.***(Mesmo que eu me prepare para a aula de inglês, eu me sinto ansioso)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***12. I feel confident when I speak English in class.***(Eu me sinto confiante quando eu falo em inglês durante as aulas)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***13. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.***(Eu tenho medo que o meu professor de inglês esteja pronto pra corrigir cada erro que eu faço)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

**14. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.***(Eu sinto o meu coração bater quando eu vou ser chamado pra participar na aula de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***15. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.***(Eu não me sinto pressionado pra me preparar muito bem pras aulas de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***16. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.***(Eu sempre sinto que outros alunos falam inglês melhor do que eu)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***17. I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.***(Eu fico preocupado em falar inglês na frente de outros alunos)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***18. English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.***(A aula de inglês passa tão rápido que eu fico preocupado em ficar pra trás)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***19. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.***(Eu fico mais tenso e apreensivo durante as aulas de inglês do que outras aulas)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***20. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.***(Eu fico apreensivo e confuso quando eu estou falando durante as aulas de inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*



**21. When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.***(Quando eu estou a caminho da aula de inglês, eu me sinto seguro e tranquilo)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***22. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.***(Eu fico apreensivo quando eu não entendo todas as palavras que o professor de inglês fala)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***23. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.***(Eu me sinto frustrado pelo número de regras que tenho que aprender pra falar inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***24. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.***(Eu tenho medo que outros alunos vão rir de mim quando eu falo inglês)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***25. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.***(Eu provavelmente me sentiria à vontade com falantes nativos de inglês)*

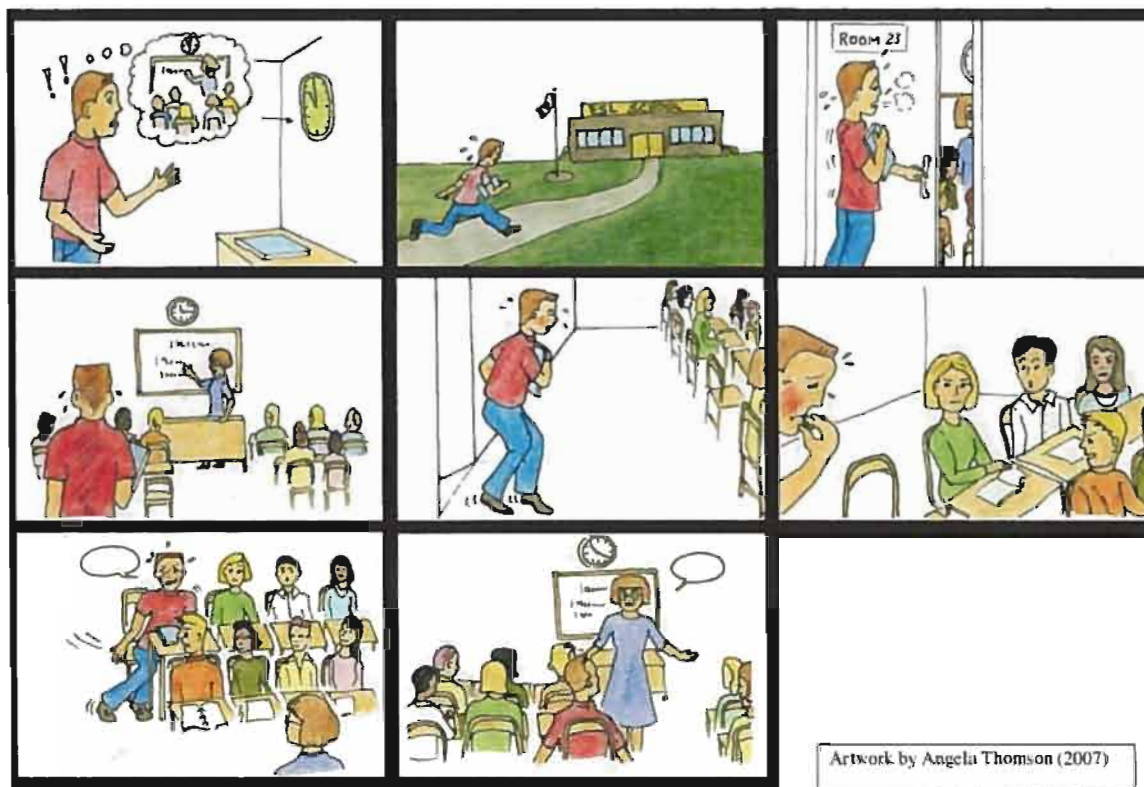
Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente***26. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.***(Eu fico apreensivo quando o professor de inglês faz perguntas que eu não preparei anteriormente)*

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

*Concordo plenamente   Concordo   Não concordo e nem discordo   Discordo   Discordo plenamente*

## Appendix J – Picture Used in Tasks 1 and 2



**Appendix K – Role-Play Used in Task 4**

*Situation: Samantha is a 13 year-old in a Canadian school and she is going to spend a month in Brazil as an exchange student. You and your family have been chosen to host her and she will be living in your house and attending your school. She is very interested in learning new things about your culture and customs. Samantha has just arrived. She walks through the front door and you greet her.*

A:

B: Hey, thanks for picking me up at the airport. I'm very excited to be here. It's my first time abroad and people say that Brazil is a great country. In your opinion, what are the best things about living here?

A:

B: I see. I'm a little worried about learning Portuguese. Some people say it's easy. Others say it's difficult. What do you think the best way to learn Portuguese is? Can you help me?

A:

B: Awesome! So, we're going to class tomorrow. I'm a little anxious about the first day of school. Can you tell me something about the school, the teacher and our classmates?

A:

B: And what are we going to do together after school tomorrow?

A:

B: That's great! I'm sure I'll have a great time here!

## Appendix L – Raters' Questionnaire: Speech Measures

The following is an example of the question that was asked of the listeners in the first of the two rating sessions. The rating scales were duplicated 240 times for responses to all 240 items.

### Instructions

*The purpose of this study is to investigate listeners' perceptions of non-native speech, with the overall goal of understanding which spoken features most contribute to these impressions.*

*First, your task is to listen to a speech sample produced by a non-native English speaker. The speech sample will be of one of these tasks:*

*Task 1: the speaker will be asked to narrate a story provided by a set of pictures using 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person narration (20 sec)*

*Task 2: the speaker will be asked to narrate the same story as in Task 1 using 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person narration (20 sec)*

*Task 3: the speaker will be asked to narrate a story provided by a short video (20 sec)*

*Task 4: the speaker will talk about a trip he/she has taken (20 sec)*

*Task 5: the speaker will perform a dialogue with the researcher*

*The first language of the speakers is Portuguese and they were all born in Brazil.*

*Second, after listening to the speech, you will be given a few seconds to provide ratings on three separate 9-point scales for comprehensibility, fluency & accentedness. Please use the following definitions to guide your judgments:*

**1. Comprehensibility** – How easy it is to understand the speaker.

**2. Fluency** – How smooth the speaker's oral delivery is based on his/her use of pauses, hesitation markers, fillers (e.g., um, uh), etc.

**3. Accentedness** – How similar or different the speakers' accent is from native speakers'.

*NOTE: The recordings you will hear are not complete recordings of the tasks, only the first seconds were selected. Speakers will produce narratives and monologues in both the 1st person ("I") and 3rd person ("he/she"). Don't worry about these grammatical variations.*

## Examples

Let's try some examples. Please circle one number only for each scale. It is important for you to ask if you have any questions. **Note: Try to use the whole rating scale for each dimension.**

Example	Comprehensibility	Fluency	Accentedness
<b>1</b>	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very easy to understand    Very hard to understand	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very fluent    Very dysfluent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 No foreign accent    Very strong foreign accent
<b>Example</b>	<b>Comprehensibility</b>	<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Accentedness</b>
<b>2</b>	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very easy to understand    Very hard to understand	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very fluent    Very dysfluent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 No foreign accent    Very strong foreign accent
<b>Example</b>	<b>Comprehensibility</b>	<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Accentedness</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>1</b> 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very easy to understand    Very hard to understand	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very fluent    Very dysfluent	<b>1</b> 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 No foreign accent    Very strong foreign accent

These scales were repeated 240 times (one scale per speech sample).

## **Appendix M – Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)**

**1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**17. I often feel like not going to my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree



### **Appendix N – Semi-structured Interview**

1. What were the moments during this course in which you didn't feel comfortable speaking English? For example, when the teacher asked for volunteers to answer questions; when you had to speak with other students in class; when you had to make presentations in front of the class; when you had to present a situation without previous preparation? Talk about any other moment you can remember.
2. Why do you think you didn't feel comfortable speaking English in those situations?
3. What were the moments during this course that made you feel comfortable speaking English? For example, when the teacher asked for volunteers to answer questions; when you had to speak with other students in class; when you had to make presentations in front of the class; when you had to present a situation without previous preparation? Talk about any other moment you can remember.
4. Why do you think you felt comfortable speaking English in those situations?

### Appendix O – Statistical Tests for Fluency

*Table 4*

ANOVA - Test of within-subjects effects for fluency

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Sphericity Assumed	18.980	1	18.980	39.071	.000	.640
	Greenhouse-Geisser	18.980	1.000	18.980	39.071	.000	.640
	Huynh-Feldt	18.980	1.000	18.980	39.071	.000	.640
	Lower-bound	18.980	1.000	18.980	39.071	.000	.640
time * Group	Sphericity Assumed	6.772	1	6.772	13.940	.001	.388
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6.772	1.000	6.772	13.940	.001	.388
	Huynh-Feldt	6.772	1.000	6.772	13.940	.001	.388
	Lower-bound	6.772	1.000	6.772	13.940	.001	.388
Error(time)	Sphericity Assumed	10.687	22	.486			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	10.687	22.000	.486			
	Huynh-Feldt	10.687	22.000	.486			
	Lower-bound	10.687	22.000	.486			
Task	Sphericity Assumed	6.491	4	1.623	2.312	.064	.095
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6.491	2.550	2.545	2.312	.095	.095
	Huynh-Feldt	6.491	3.044	2.133	2.312	.083	.095
	Lower-bound	6.491	1.000	6.491	2.312	.143	.095
task * Group	Sphericity Assumed	1.897	4	.474	.676	.610	.030
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1.897	2.550	.744	.676	.547	.030
	Huynh-Feldt	1.897	3.044	.623	.676	.572	.030
	Lower-bound	1.897	1.000	1.897	.676	.420	.030
Error(task)	Sphericity Assumed	61.753	88	.702			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	61.753	56.101	1.101			
	Huynh-Feldt	61.753	66.963	.922			
	Lower-bound	61.753	22.000	2.807			

Tests of between-subjects effects for fluency ratings

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	4873.239	1	4873.239	782.243	.000	.973
Group	11.247	1	11.247	1.805	.193	.076
Error	137.056	22	6.230			

*Table 5*  
Independent samples test – fluency

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
T1	Equal variances assumed	8.392	.004	-.470	118	.639	-.0973	.2072	-.5076	.3129
	Equal variances not assumed			-.456	92.985	.650	-.0973	.2136	-.5214	.3268
T2	Equal variances assumed	13.709	.000	-4.263	118	.000	-.7716	.1810	-1.1300	-.4132
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.094	84.404	.000	-.7716	.1885	-1.1464	-.3968

*Table 6*  
Paired samples statistics – fluency measures

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	TG T1	4.755	65	.9175	.1138
	TG T2	3.854	65	.7257	.0900
Pair 2	CG T1	4.853	55	1.3402	.1807
	CG T2	4.625	55	1.2281	.1656

*Table 7*  
Paired samples test – fluency measures

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair1 TG T1 TG T2	.9015	.9256	.1148	.6722	1.1309	7.853	64	.000
Pair 2 CG T1 CG T2	.2273	1.0699	.1443	-.0620	.5165	1.575	54	.121

### Appendix P – Statistical Tests for Comprehensibility

*Table 9*

ANOVA - Test of within-subjects effects for comprehensibility

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Sphericity Assumed	17.552	1	17.552	33.408	.000	.603
	Greenhouse-Geisser	17.552	1.000	17.552	33.408	.000	.603
	Huynh-Feldt	17.552	1.000	17.552	33.408	.000	.603
	Lower-bound	17.552	1.000	17.552	33.408	.000	.603
time * Group	Sphericity Assumed	3.725	1	3.725	7.089	.014	.244
	Greenhouse-Geisser	3.725	1.000	3.725	7.089	.014	.244
	Huynh-Feldt	3.725	1.000	3.725	7.089	.014	.244
	Lower-bound	3.725	1.000	3.725	7.089	.014	.244
Error(time)	Sphericity Assumed	11.558	22	.525			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	11.558	22.000	.525			
	Huynh-Feldt	11.558	22.000	.525			
	Lower-bound	11.558	22.000	.525			
Task	Sphericity Assumed	6.668	4	1.667	3.411	.012	.134
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6.668	2.808	2.375	3.411	.025	.134
	Huynh-Feldt	6.668	3.407	1.957	3.411	.017	.134
	Lower-bound	6.668	1.000	6.668	3.411	.078	.134
task * Group	Sphericity Assumed	1.122	4	.281	.574	.682	.025
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1.122	2.808	.400	.574	.623	.025
	Huynh-Feldt	1.122	3.407	.329	.574	.655	.025
	Lower-bound	1.122	1.000	1.122	.574	.457	.025
Error(task)	Sphericity Assumed	43.003	88	.489			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	43.003	61.780	.696			
	Huynh-Feldt	43.003	74.965	.574			
	Lower-bound	43.003	22.000	1.955			

Tests of between-subjects effects for comprehensibility ratings

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	3794.776	1	3794.776	813.480	.000	.974
Group	.111	1	.111	.024	.879	.001
Error	102.627	22	4.665			

Table 10

Independent samples test – comprehensibility

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
T1	Equal variances assumed	4.963	.028	1.124	118	.263	.2069	.1841	-.1576	.5714
	Equal variances not assumed			1.096	97.536	.276	.2069	.1887	-.1677	.5814
T2	Equal variances assumed	5.647	.019	-1.927	118	.056	-.2931	.1521	-.5944	-.0081
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.865	91.056	.065	-.2931	.1572	-.6054	.0191

Table 11

Paired samples statistics – comprehensibility measures

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	TG T1	4.365	65	.8529
	TG T2	3.572	65	.6601
Pair 2	CG T1	4.158	55	1.1591
	CG T2	3.865	55	.9950

Table 12

Paired samples test – comprehensibility measures

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair1	TG T1	.7928	.8684	.1077	.5776	1.0080	7.360	64	.000
	TG T2								
Pair 2	CG T1	.2927	.9116	.1229	.0463	.5392	2.381	54	.021
	CG T2								

### Appendix Q – Statistical Test for Accent

*Table 14*

ANOVA - Test of within-subjects effects for accent

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Sphericity Assumed	5.206	1	5.206	18.170	.000	.452
	Greenhouse-Geisser	5.206	1.000	5.206	18.170	.000	.452
	Huynh-Feldt	5.206	1.000	5.206	18.170	.000	.452
	Lower-bound	5.206	1.000	5.206	18.170	.000	.452
time * Group	Sphericity Assumed	.109	1	.109	.382	.543	.017
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.109	1.000	.109	.382	.543	.017
	Huynh-Feldt	.109	1.000	.109	.382	.543	.017
	Lower-bound	.109	1.000	.109	.382	.543	.017
Error(time)	Sphericity Assumed	6.303	22	.287			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6.303	22.000	.287			
	Huynh-Feldt	6.303	22.000	.287			
	Lower-bound	6.303	22.000	.287			
Task	Sphericity Assumed	4.043	4	1.011	6.549	.000	.229
	Greenhouse-Geisser	4.043	3.394	1.191	6.549	.000	.229
	Huynh-Feldt	4.043	4.000	1.011	6.549	.000	.229
	Lower-bound	4.043	1.000	4.043	6.549	.018	.229
task * Group	Sphericity Assumed	.890	4	.223	1.442	.227	.062
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.890	3.394	.262	1.442	.234	.062
	Huynh-Feldt	.890	4.000	.223	1.442	.227	.062
	Lower-bound	.890	1.000	.890	1.442	.243	.062
Error(task)	Sphericity Assumed	13.582	88	.154			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	13.582	74.669	.182			
	Huynh-Feldt	13.582	88.000	.154			
	Lower-bound	13.582	22.000	.617			

Tests of between-subjects effects for accent ratings

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	8220.350	1	8220.350	4190.077	.000	.995
Group	4.039	1	4.039	2.059	.165	.086
Error	43.161	22	1.962			

## Appendix R – Statistical Tests for FLSA

**Table 16**

**ANOVA - Test of within-subjects effects for FLSA**

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Sphericity Assumed	.680	1	.680	13.933	.001	.388
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.680	1.000	.680	13.933	.001	.388
	Huynh-Feldt	.680	1.000	.680	13.933	.001	.388
	Lower-bound	.680	1.000	.680	13.933	.001	.388
time * Group	Sphericity Assumed	.007	1	.007	.134	.718	.006
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.007	1.000	.007	.134	.718	.006
	Huynh-Feldt	.007	1.000	.007	.134	.718	.006
	Lower-bound	.007	1.000	.007	.134	.718	.006
Error(time)	Sphericity Assumed	1.074	22	.049			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1.074	22.000	.049			
	Huynh-Feldt	1.074	22.000	.049			
	Lower-bound	1.074	22.000	.049			

Tests of between-subjects effects for FLSA scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	210.448	1	210.448	848.861	.000	.975
Group	.484	1	.484	1.951	.176	.081
Error	5.454	22	.248			

**Table 17**

**Pearson's *r* correlations between FLSA and fluency, comprehensibility and accent**

	FLSA T1	FLSA T2	Fluency T1	Fluency T2	Comprehensibility T1	Comprehensibility T2	Accent T1	Accent T2
FLSA T1	1							
Pearson's <i>r</i>		.705**	-.194	-.313	-.269	-.308	-.280	-.291
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.364	.137	.204	.144	.185	.168
N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
FLSA T2		1						
Pearson's <i>r</i>			-.100	-.202	-.158	-.245	-.218	-.280
Sig. (2-tailed)			.641	.345	.460	.248	.305	.185
N		24	24	24	24	24	24	24

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Appendix S – Verbatim Transcriptions of the Semi-Structured Interviews

### Control Group

#### Learner 1

Answer to Question 1: *No, I think the teacher...makes us feel very...comfortable...she's very...she gives us a lot of attention...I think the teacher helps a lot...she makes me feel confident...I felt embarrassed to speak in front of the class.*

Answer to Question 2: *I don't know...I'm afraid they doesn't like...not because of my English...but...because I'm shy.*

Answer to Question 3: *Yes, I think...uh...the classes are very open and...we can talk...we can speak in English and I can give my opinion...like that and I think it's good... I like to express myself.*

Answer to Question 4: *I don't know...I think the teacher...makes us feel very...comfortable...she's very...she gives us a lot of attention... I think the teacher helps a lot...she makes me feel confident.*

#### Learner 2

Answer to Question 1: *Hum...I think never. I don't like when the teacher asks questions...and presentations.*

Answer to Question 2: *I think because I have...uh...difficult and...I think...uh...I think other...other peoples...knows more than me.*

Answer to Question 3: *When...when I was...speaking with the teacher.*



Answer to Question 4: *Because she knows when I talk...to he...I...I think that...that I know English too.*

### **Learner 3**

Answer to Question 1: *No, maybe when we have...had a presentation. It's a work...you have to say something you like.*

Answer to Question 2: *...hum... because it's in front of everybody...I don't know. I feel comfortable but I'm a little bit shy... If it's something you know it's easy...but if it's something you don't know...it's difficult.*

Answer to Question 3: *In the class...uh...during the class.*

Answer to Question 4: *Uh...I don't know.*

### **Learner 4**

Answer to Question 1: *The presentations... we do three presentations...one was...we can...was free...we can choose our...our...topic and we can search at...at all websites we wanted...the second was based on an article...that we choosed...and the third one...was free...our topic was free but we couldn't search in a website we wanted...we just searched in websites that the teacher recommend.*

Answer to Question 2: *Because I'm a little bit shy..... I'm shy to...to talk...in front of my class.*

Answer to Question 3: *Uh...the activities in class...I feel really comfortable to speak in English...when the teacher asks me questions...uh...I fell really comfortable...with the teacher.... I always is the first volunteer... I feel comfortable when...we have to talk with...with a friend about exercise... in that situations.*

Answer to Question 4: *I don't worry...uh...about my English because I'm here to learn.*

*I just feel un...uncomfortable talking about...in front of my class...because I'm a little bit shy.*

### **Learner 5**

Answer to Question 1: *No, I don't remember some that's happened....I like English.*

Answer to Question 2: *I didn't have problems with that.*

Answer to Question 3: *Yeah, in the all...in the all course I have...I have been comfortable to speak ...and today I have a presentation and it was very good...there is no problem to do this.*

*It was about soccer...that was invented in England...and I talk about soccer...where was invented...uh...I don't know...the...some teams that play...the last soccer championship...about his...that things.*

Answer to Question 4: *No...It was natural...it is easy for me.*

### **Learner 6**

Answer to Question 1: *No...uh...sometimes making presentations...when I didn't know the word I need to speak...I was a little nervous.*

Answer to Question 2: *Because uh...when I don't know what to say I get a little nervous because I'm...I'm...like...in front of the class...and all these things.*

Answer to Question 3: *I think normal...in all the time.*

Answer to Question 4: *Because normally I know what to say and...it's like...my friends so I don't feel uncomfortable.*

**Learner 7**

Answer to Question 1: *No, I...I always feel comfortable at speaking English...to make presentations is a little embarrassing but just a little...and not feel uncomfortable*

Answer to Question 2: *Because sometimes we...we...stutter...and it was a little embarrassing but just kidding...no one cares.*

Answer to Question 3: *Yes, my score tests...I was very good and here I'm very good too...and my...and my...my English...my voice speaking English uh...it's really better.*

Answer to Question 4: *Because when we talk Portuguese the teacher say: "Oh stop...speak English" so I speak...I began to speak English.*

**Learner 8**

Answer to Question 1: *In class? I think don't have this...I didn't...I was comfortable...I don't remember...I didn't have scared if I was wrong or right...in the presentation I presented...I studied very hard in...the last days...but no...only if I didn't study.*

Answer to Question 2: *...I was comfortable.*

Answer to Question 3: *Uh...maybe in the lab.*

Answer to Question 4: *Because I study... because I like English...so I study and...I didn't have scared.*

**Learner 9**

Answer to Question 1: *No.....sometimes I'm speak...uh...because I don't like to always say the answer and let other students...uh...don't...for...don't speak...if I...even if I...if I get the wrong answer...I will be ok because I'm here to study...in presentations...I have to do one*

*now so I have to...but yeah...it's easy because there is not an audience with one hundred people, I don't know...there are only five so for me it's ok.*

*Answer to Question 2: Well...when you say anything wrong you always feel a little...uncomfortable but it's normal.*

*Answer to Question 3: Uh...I think I understand everything the teacher say and I'm very happy about it.*

*Answer to Question 4: Because I always...I always...I don't miss class and I know what the teacher is talking about so I...it's pretty easy for me...because if I don't feel comfortable speaking English I won't go to the United States...I don't know...maybe...I have a uncle there...he lives there so sometimes...sometimes I will go there and be a month there...I don't know.*

#### **Learner 10**

*Answer to Question 1: No, not at all...uh...in presentations sometimes I get shy...but I didn't feel uncomfortable...just shy.*

*Answer to Question 2: Because everyone's looking at you and...and this makes me get shy.*

*Answer to Question 3: Yes, all the time I feel comfortable.*

*Answer to Question 4: I think it's because...when I get back to the...the trip that I make...I feel more comfortable because...I don't know...I think I get...I got better...the school helps me to...to get better...the teachers...they are very good.*

#### **Learner 11**

*Answer to Question 1: I guess not because...uh...during all my life my dad...uh...pushed me to English because he did not...uh...knew how to speak and then he had a job...kind of job in*

*the United States and he has some problems and he had to use my mom like a dictionary...and he always said to me that English was important because when I was like...uh...a woman...I would had to...know this language...normally I feel comfortable and sometimes I raise my hand to... respond the question but uh...some...sometimes I don't know the answer so I just...stay alone in my place...and don't say nothing...for me speaking with other students is ok because...uh...I don't have much problems with...speaking...sometimes I forget some words but that's ok...and I'm ok with this...when I have to make presentations...normally I...prepare myself...uh...before...but sometimes I can't do this...but...uh...but when I...first...at first I feel like...wow...I'm gonna...do some mistakes...great...but then I present...and everything goes ok...and every time I didn't forget...normally I don't feel comfortable before...but then I feel ok.*

*Answer to Question 2: Because since I was a little kid I have...a really big fear of doing mistakes...so...because I...my father always says what I have done wrong and he pushes it...so hard...and it's really difficult for me to...do not see the things like bad things...I try to think...it's for the best but...sometimes it's difficult.*

*Answer to Question 3: Uh...there was uh...a presentation and I felt more comfortable...when I was...in the front of the class...that I had a paper in my hand so...I wrote some answers but...in the end I just didn't look at it.*

*Answer to Question 4: Because...uh...when I write things on a paper...I write the whole sentence...not just ...some words that help me...I write the whole sentence so...it helps me to remember some words sometimes...but...uh...most of the...uh...situations I...don't use it.*

## Treatment Group

### Learner 12

Answer to Question 1: *I think the only moment I didn't feel comfortable in speaking English...don't happen yet...is the presentation of the...of the...theatre...theatre play...yes...I think it's the only moment I didn't feel very comfortable.*

Answer to Question 2: *I'm shy...and many people will see.*

Answer to Question 3: *I think I feel comfortable speaking English all the time here in school...the activities is awesome... and I feel comfortable any time to speak English...and I think what really helped me is...we are training for the play and this help me very much*

Answer to Question 4: *Because we have to speak louder... we have to make eye contact... we have to say everything correctly...uh...I think that's it.*

### Learner 13

Answer to Question 1: *I don't know...I think it's when we need to rehearse in the first time...I think...uh...I'm shy so I didn't feel so comfortable but late...later some rehearse I felt more comfortable... I'm shy so I don't like to act...exactly...but later it was good.*

Answer to Question 2: *No...I think I'm shy...only this...I don't know... I think the play...the play help you to...be a little bit less shy...I don't know.*

Answer to Question 3: *I think it's normal...because rehearsal...we...we...just...uh...I don't know...I just be less shy when I start to practice more and speak more English...I don't know...I think speak...speak is a good way to...don't be shy...the play is very good for it.*

Answer to Question 4: *I think we need...because we need to act and speak English loud...speak English loud help very much...and act too...we make more body language...I don't know...it's good.*

#### **Learner 14**

Answer to Question 1: *Uh...in the beginning...when I thought I have to make the play... I get a little shy so I thought that I wouldn't go well...but when we...we begin to rehearse...uh...it was very funny so I could uh...talk very normally... and...when I...if I talk with other classroom...uh... sometimes I get a little...uh...sometimes I'm afraid to make mistakes but uh...just uh...before I get...I begun...I begin talking but when I...when I begin to talk I don't.*

Answer to Question 2: *I thought that uh...I wouldn't talk English very good so my friends will get...you know...they would think I am uh...not good...but later I thought that...it was everything...everyone was talking like the same way so I don't.*

Answer to Question 3: *Uh...yeah...when I...talk to my friends and they talk to me...they understand what I was saying...they understand me...so I feel very comfortable..I don't feel shy but I get like uh...I say...in the play I get a little shy...but in the rehearsing...I feel very comfortable.*

Answer to Question 4: *...uh...when I know my lines it's easy to me to talk because I know what I'm going to say but uh...when I rehearsing...it's very funny so I don't care if I will...uh...I will make mistakes because anyone would get angry...if I make a mistake and we would have to...to begin like the no...from the beginning...but I don't care...uh...when we...talk to...when I talk to the other my friends...I...sometimes we make like...jokes so...it's more easy to talk to them.*

**Learner 15**

Answer to Question 1: *Uh...no speaking English...but in the beginning of the course...when the tea...when the teacher said to us we have to do the play...we are with very...very fear...you know...we have to do the play.*

Answer to Question 2: *Uh...because...we have to memorize the lines...so it was...it was kind of terrible but now is ok...but speaking English in this course was very...was very easy.*

Answer to Question 3: *Two months later...from the beginning of the course...make the play...be more comfortable...relaxed...it was very good.*

Answer to Question 4: *The persons in the class...are so friendly so I don't have any problems with that...any times of uncomfortable I think.*

**Learner 16**

Answer to Question 1: *No...it was very...easy...when I had to talk with other students...I feel...a little...nervous but...the rest is very...easy...not easy...but good.*

Answer to Question 2: *Uh...now I less nervous...I think more you talk more...you...how do you say...you confident.*

Answer to Question 3: *The presentation is very fun and...I think it's more easy to talk and...interact with the others...I will be the James Bond girl...Lisa...Linda...and...uh...there's a director...and he talk about the film but...in the end...there's no film because...he received a letter and...talking about the film was cancelled. I feel more comfortable...speaking English.*

Answer to Question 4: *Because it's not me...it's Linda...because it's more...relaxed.*



**Learner 17**

Answer to Question 1: *Well, no...actually not...I like speaking English.*

Answer to Question 2: *...I feel comfortable...yeah.*

Answer to Question 3: *Any moments...you know...when teacher...ask me to say something...to...you know...answer the exercise...I like.*

Answer to Question 4: *I like...to improve my English.*

**Learner 18**

Answer to Question 1: *Uh...I can remember one exercise that we had to make strange voices and I felt a little embarrassed...we were learning how to tell stories...to sleep...the intonation and the teacher asked for the voice to make the person...the character that was a girl so we have to make a strange voice...and the girls have to make characters that was a boy*

Answer to Question 2: *...I don't know...I felt a little embarrassed because the teacher say that we have to make a voice that was very strange.*

Answer to Question 3: *Uh...I just don't felt very comfortable in ...that case...but when the teacher called us and asked us to talk with other person...I feel comfortable.*

Answer to Question 4: *No...because I'm used to the people of the class...we know...when I entered in the school...I studied with all of them...almost.*

**Learner 19**

Answer to Question 1: *No.*

Answer to Question 2: *I don't know...serious...I don't know... because I had the same teacher since I was in Teens 2 so basically the whole course...I feel more comfortable...I feel comfortable uh...talking English but in the class it's better.*

Answer to Question 3: *Yes...say a lot of things...don't stop talking...can talk a lot of English...so...*

Answer to Question 4: *I don't know...all the time...the same teacher...the same...the same methods...so the teacher became more open for me.*

## **Learner 20**

Answer to Question 1: *I think one day that she...we have to uh...read a text but with a voice of the person so...I was an old woman and I had to say like an old woman...I'm shy...so it was a little embarrassing.*

Answer to Question 2: *Most part because I'm shy...some people were like...looking at me like...it was a little strange.*

Answer to Question 3: *I think most of the activities...uh...when...not everyone's staring...like just me and...I don't know...someone...and I think it's easier because this person maybe have the same English that you so...you don't need to worry.*

Answer to Question 4: *like I say...I feel comfortable...because the teacher was saying "oh you're doing a great job"...I don't know...I just feel like we're not...doing the wrong thing.*

## **Learner 21**

Answer to Question 1: *In the...when I...when I had to talk...on the...when I have to talk with uh...everybody I feel uncomfortable but in this course I feel more comfortable to talk with everybody...and talk uh...in the front of the people.*

Answer to Question 2: *I don't know but I think the...drama project makes us more comfortable to talk in front of people... It's a kind of theatre...and conversation that I think it's the activity to help us.*

Answer to Question 3: *I feel more comfortable when I'm reading a text or when I'm...uh...when we're playing a game... for example...with everybody...I think...uh...these activities are helping to feel more comfortable to talk out of the course with other people.*

Answer to Question 4: *I don't know but...I don't know.*

## **Learner 22**

Answer to Question 1: *When I...talk with a person that...uh...know more than me...and I don't like to present in front of...in front of the class.*

Answer to Question 2: *No...because I'm shy...and I don't feel comfortable....but with the students I don't feel uncomfortable.*

Answer to Question 3: *Yes...when I read about the...the...uh...when I read about the...about a subject...I'm...I'm feel comfortable...because I know what I will say*

Answer to Question 4: *When it's about a subject that I like...and that I know...when I know what I'm saying and...for example music...about my routine...it's easier to speak about it...when it's...something I don't like...I don't like talking.*

## **Learner 23**

Answer to Question 1: *In this course I don't remember to have these moments...sometimes I was embarrassed...but the biggest part...was ok.*

Answer to Question 2: *I don't remember exactly the parts...uh...I think I'm shy and sometimes I get embarrassed.*

Answer to Question 3: *I think yes...but I don't remember exactly the moments...I think...when the teacher asks of some experiences...uh...that we had...when I was a...child...*

Answer to Question 4: *I guess I get more secu...security of me to speak...this course I think it's...I get better...than the others... I don't know... I think the same persons...helped to be comfortable.*

#### **Learner 24**

Answer to Question 1: *In this course I didn't feel bad speaking English...yes...I feel good when I'm speaking English.*

Answer to Question 2: *I don't know...I didn't worry.*

Answer to Question 3: *In the lab...I don't know...I felt comfortable speaking English in the lab...when the teacher asked me a question and I answer correct...and the teacher say it was correct...I felt comfortable...I felt comfortable...specifically when I prepare what I'm going to say...the presentation...the drama project...we're going to present a scene of...uh...a bank...a bank that this bank was robbed.*

Answer to Question 4: *Because I prepare what I'm going to say...I felt comfortable.*